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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

**ITALY, THE EUROPEAN UNION, AND
MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANTS: OPPORTUNITY
FROM CRISIS?**

by

Matthew L. R. Fillmore

September 2016

Thesis Advisor:
Co-Advisor:

David Yost
Zachary Shore

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**ITALY, THE EUROPEAN UNION, AND MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANTS:
OPPORTUNITY FROM CRISIS?**

Matthew L. R. Fillmore
Lieutenant, United States Navy
B.A., Vanderbilt University, 2010

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES
(EUROPE AND EURASIA)**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
September 2016**

Approved by: David Yost, Ph.D.
Thesis Advisor

Zachary Shore, Ph.D.
Co-Advisor

Mohammad Hafez, Ph.D.
Chair, Department of National Security Affairs

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ABSTRACT

Since 2013, civil and interstate wars have roiled North Africa and the Middle East. These conflicts, along with poverty in both regions, have led to the largest migration to Europe since the end of World War II. This thesis considers the effects of mass migration on Italy and the European Union (EU). It examines Italian and EU military responses to the migrant crisis, as well as possible means to dedicate greater resources to aid in security endeavors. This thesis also explores the impacts that the migrant crisis has had on the Italian economy and politics. It analyzes the Italian immigration system, along with how it interfaces with the EU's immigration system, and explores ways in which both can promote more effective migrant and refugee economic integration. This thesis concludes that current EU and Italian efforts to address the Mediterranean migrant crisis are falling short of effectively managing the migrant and refugee influx. This thesis recommends NATO involvement concerning the security and flow management aspects of this challenge, and also argues that better economic integration of the migrants and refugees may hold the key to economic renewal in various EU member states, notably Italy.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIS	Automatic Identification Services
ARCI	<i>Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana</i>
CNDA	<i>Commissione nazionale per il diritto di asilo</i>
CSDP	Common Security and Defense Policy
CTRPI	<i>Commissioni territoriali per il riconoscimento della protezione internazionale</i>
EDA	European Defense Agency
EU	European Union
EUNAVFOR Med	European Union Naval Forces Mediterranean
FLIR	Forward-Looking Infrared
FLS	Forward Logistics Site
FRONTEX	European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union
FSM	Five Star Movement
HIP	Humanitarian Innovation Project
ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant
LN	<i>Lega Nord</i>
MOD	Ministry of Defense
MPA	Maritime Patrol Aircraft
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
RHIB	Rigid-hull Inflatable Boat
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander, Europe
VAT	Value-Added Tax
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution

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PREFACE

It is not often that the realm of the academic is able to effectively merge with one's professional experience. The Naval Postgraduate School is one such institution where this notion happens more commonly. As I began my studies at the Naval Postgraduate School, global news sources were often occupied by the seemingly never-ending headlines concerning the Mediterranean migrant crisis. My own operational experience mirrors many of the grim events that continue to take place in the Mediterranean Sea and sparked my interest in the topic.

In late September 2010, I was a newly commissioned Ensign assigned to the USS *Winston S. Churchill* homeported in Norfolk, Virginia. I had flown out and met the ship in the Indian Ocean a few months prior on my first deployment. While on patrol in the Gulf of Aden, the *Churchill* came across a boat of migrants who were stranded at sea while on their way to Yemen from Somalia. Their small skiff, which had tarps rigged along the edges to keep water out, had 85 people crammed onto it and no functioning motor. The *Churchill* and her crew were obliged to render assistance to the distressed mariners by first attempting to restart their motor. After the ship's most skilled engineman was unable to repair the motor, we hooked the skiff up to one of our rigid hull inflatable boats (RHIB) and began towing the skiff back toward the Somali coast where its journey started.

Our efforts to tow the skiff were cautious, as the skiff was not very seaworthy; this compelled the operation to proceed at a slow pace. The men, women, and children aboard the skiff also lacked the necessary supplies to continue their voyage at sea, which necessitated supply runs from our ship. The seas began to slowly build as our RHIB continued to tow the skiff. On the morning of September 27, 2010, I walked up to the bridge to go on watch and serve as the Conning Officer for the next three hours. As I surveyed the ship's surroundings, I observed some of our crew on a supply run to the skiff. As they began to toss over supplies, a few people in the skiff began to rush over to the side from which it was being resupplied. The sudden rush of people to one side of the barely seaworthy skiff caused the boat to capsize and sent all 85 people into the water.

The crew immediately sprang into action. The two RHIBs began to recover people from the water, and subsequently placed themselves at risk of capsizing due to being swarmed by the desperate migrants. Once the migrants were onboard, the rest of the crew began to administer life-saving care. In one case, a young Sailor who served as the ship's barber administered CPR to a migrant and saved his life (her heroic efforts merited a call from President Obama a few months later, around Christmas). The rest of the crew took to sorting the migrants and arranging their accommodations until we could transfer them to a larger vessel with more room and medical capabilities. Despite the valiant efforts of the crew of the USS *Winston S. Churchill*, 13 of the migrants drowned, while eight were never recovered. The following few hours while I was on watch, I remember sailing around in an effort to recover more survivors, but our efforts were in vain. The event encompassed the very best of human nature from the response of the crew, but it also displayed the brutal and unforgiving consequences of war, poverty, and human smuggling. The crew of the USS *Winston S. Churchill* encountered a snapshot of a growing trend around the world; one that emanates from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, with effects measured on a global scale. This one event during the *Churchill's* 2010 deployment has played out day after day with the Italian Navy and European Union Naval Forces in the Mediterranean since the beginning of the migrant crisis.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To my friends and shipmates from that 2010 deployment on the USS *Winston S. Churchill*: I hope that this study will help policy makers understand the global effect of mass migration that we encountered in September 2010. The efforts of many of those involved with the rescue mission went largely unnoticed, and I hope this work will honor your selfless and brave actions. I would also like to extend warm thanks to David Yost, Zachary Shore, and Anne Marie Baylouny for their help and guidance with this thesis.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since 2013, due in large part to the wars in Syria and Libya, the largest migration of people since World War II has taken place on the European continent.¹ Syrian refugees have streamed across the border into Turkey and proceeded to Greece by the hundreds of thousands, while in Libya, the fall of Muammar Ghadafi and subsequent implosion of the Libyan state precipitated the efforts of several hundred thousand refugees and migrants to attempt crossing the Mediterranean Sea to Italy. While the routes have been different, both migrant and refugee streams have entailed a crossing of the Mediterranean Sea or its subsidiary waterways. The world has watched the same repeatedly: overcrowded boats filled with desperate people, economic migrants and refugees alike. In their desperation, thousands of migrants have perished during their journey across the waters, transforming the Mediterranean Sea into a nautical graveyard and its coasts into a waypoint for the huddled masses.

The Mediterranean migrant crisis continues to make headlines around the world. Thousands of migrants and refugees attempt to cross the Mediterranean Sea on a yearly basis, the tide stemming from civil and interstate wars across Northern Africa and the Middle East, as well as poor economic conditions throughout Africa that motivate people to search for a better life. The dearth of economic opportunity and the preponderance of conflict in the aforementioned regions have wide-ranging implications that are no longer primarily limited to the country of origin; as mass and nearly uncontrolled migration continues into Europe, the political and economic impacts are already emerging.

Europe finds itself occupied, either directly or indirectly, with challenges involving the migrant crisis on a near-daily basis. The European Union's (EU) Naval Forces Mediterranean is the military operation for the humanitarian response and at-sea rescue of the migrants, and it is the frontline European military response to the crisis. The political aspects of the migrant crisis occupy the European Union after the refugees and migrants arrive in Europe. The most recent politically seismic event to strike the

¹ Sewell Chan, "How a Record Number of Migrants Made Their Way to Europe," *New York Times*, December 22, 2015, <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/23/world/europe/migrant-crisis-europe-million.html>.

European Union, the June 2016 Brexit referendum, was partially a result of the migrant crisis.² Nearly every terrorist attack in Europe brings fresh and renewed criticism of the European Union's response to the migrant crisis.³ The almost-daily arrival of migrants and refugees from neighboring regional conflicts will continue to stoke the fires of the immigration debate within Europe, and even with a political solution that quelled the continental anxieties today, the refugees and migrants that have already arrived within EU borders, over a million in 2015, will be an issue for the foreseeable future.⁴

Though the impacts of the migrant crisis are far-reaching and constantly evolving across the European continent, detailed analysis through examination of a specific country and its response to the crisis may serve as a useful tool for policymakers across the European Union. There is perhaps no better case to study in the Mediterranean migrant crisis than Italy. As a frontline nation in the crisis, Italy initiated one of the largest humanitarian efforts regarding the migrant crisis to date, and did so nearly alone. Italy also serves as a major initial entry point into the European Union for refugees and migrants, and is second only to Greece in this regard. Italy's economy is therefore disproportionately affected by the migrant crisis compared to most other European Union member states, a fact that continues to breed unrest in the native Italian population and is a source of political strife. Italy's attempts to manage the crisis are hindered by its own domestic policies concerning asylum and are further compounded by Italy's agreements with the European Union concerning the same issue.

As Libya experienced conflict that turned into a civil war in 2011, thousands of migrants and refugees from across Africa and the Middle East began converging on the war-torn country in 2013 to make the perilous journey to Italy. Approximately 60,000 people reached Europe via the Mediterranean Sea in 2013, and most of them landed in

² Abi Wilkinson, "The Brexit Vote Is Really About Just One Thing," *New Republic*, June 21, 2016, <https://newrepublic.com/article/134507/brexit-vote-really-just-one-thing>.

³ Tim Lister, "'One ISIS Attack Every 84 Hours,' Spurs Dread and Anger in Europe," CNN, July 31, 2016, <http://www.cnn.com/2016/07/31/europe/isis-attacks-escalating-europe/>.

⁴ Jonathan Clayton and Hereward Holland, "Over One Million Sea Arrivals Reach Europe in 2015," UNHCR, December 30, 2015, <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/latest/2015/12/5683d0b56/million-sea-arrivals-reach-europe-2015.html>.

Italy.⁵ Europe found itself thoroughly unprepared for the onslaught of migrants, and Italy bore the brunt of the crisis, as its southernmost territory—the island named Lampedusa—lies only 183 miles from Tripoli, Libya. By September 2013, Lampedusa, with only 6,000 inhabitants, found itself inundated with over 1,300 migrants.⁶ Lampedusa had room for only 850 migrants in what essentially amounted to a detention camp, and conditions became abhorrent.⁷ Migrants began openly protesting in the streets, which infuriated natives and pushed them to a violent response.⁸ Eventually, officials transferred the migrants to prison ships and other Italian facilities.⁹

Italy reached a major turning point in its response to the Mediterranean migrant crisis when tragedy struck and compelled the government to become proactive in its response. In October 2013, over 300 migrants perished off the coast of Lampedusa when a boat with 500 migrants capsized.¹⁰ This event galvanized public opinion in Italy, and the Italian Navy initiated Operation *Mare Nostrum* within a matter of days of the “*tragedia di Lampedusa*.”¹¹

Mare Nostrum was a well-equipped and robust crisis-response operation that saved upwards of 150,000 migrants.¹² At a cost of €9 million per month of operation, the Italian Navy not only rescued migrants, but also seized human traffickers’ motherships and captured 330 alleged human traffickers.¹³ Despite the success of *Mare Nostrum*, the

⁵ “Mapping Mediterranean Migration,” BBC, September 15, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-24521614>.

⁶ Jeffrey Tayler, “Amid Record Waves of Refugees, Italy Finding Limits to Its Compassion,” *National Geographic*, October 30, 2014, <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/special-features/2014/10/141031-italy-immigration-crisis-human-trafficking/>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Adam Taylor, “Italy Ran an Operation that Saved Thousands of Migrants from Drowning in the Mediterranean. Why Did It Stop?” *Washington Post*, April 20, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/04/20/italy-ran-an-operation-that-save-thousands-of-migrants-from-drowning-in-the-mediterranean-why-did-it-stop/>.

¹¹ Tayler, “Amid Record Waves of Refugees.”

¹² “Operation Mare Nostrum,” Marina Militare: Ministero Della Difesa, accessed August 28, 2015, <http://www.marina.difesa.it/EN/operations/Pagine/MareNostrum.aspx>.

¹³ Ibid.

Italian government stopped the operation in October 2014.¹⁴ The Italian Interior Minister, Angelino Alfano, stated in announcing the operation's conclusion that "*Mare Nostrum* is closing down because it was an emergency operation."¹⁵ However, the emergency was far from winding down.

The costs of mounting the successful, although expensive, humanitarian response Operation *Mare Nostrum* represent but a fraction of the overall Italian costs of the crisis. Since 2011, Italy has allocated €2.9 billion in crisis-response funds, which include migrant shelters, health care, counseling, clothing, language training, and vocational training.¹⁶ The entire process takes from 12 to 18 months until migrants granted asylum can enter the Italian workforce.¹⁷ With a deficit accounting for 130% of GDP, Italy can hardly spare the finances to provide for the migrants without adding more to its debt.¹⁸ The European Union mandates that all members limit their annual deficits to 3%, with member states going above that percentage having to pay penalties.¹⁹ In its 2016 budget presented to the European Commission, Italy requested a 0.2% waiver on its target deficit allowance, which equates to roughly €3 billion.²⁰ This amount is nearly identical to the sum that Italy has spent thus far in response to the migrant crisis.

Italy continues to struggle to provide shelter to the thousands of migrants arriving on its shores. In August 2015, the government announced a plan to convert former prisons into lodgings in order to accommodate 20,000 migrants.²¹ Migrant centers have

¹⁴ Taylor, "Italy Ran an Operation that Saved Thousands of Migrants."

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Liam Moloney, "Booming Migrant Business in Italy Comes Under Scrutiny," *Wall Street Journal*, April 24, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/booming-migrant-business-in-italy-comes-under-scrutiny-1429848102>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Tony Barber, "Italy's Finance Minister Defends Rome Against Budget Criticism," *Financial Times*, November 11, 2015, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/b15d2d8c-8881-11e5-90de-f44762bf9896.html#axzz3r7PituVv>.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Umberto Bacchi, "EU Migrant Crisis: Italy Prepares Ex-prisons to Accommodate 20,000 New Arrivals," *International Business Times*, August 27, 2015, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/eu-migrant-crisis-italy-prepares-ex-prisons-accommodate-20000-new-arrivals-1517368>.

sprouted up in many cities in southern Italy, as the Italian government has increased its financial assistance to the migrants. The Italian Interior Ministry pays the migrant centers approximately €35 per adult and €80 per child hosted on a daily basis, and gives the migrants another €2 to €2.5 daily allowance.²² This rather generous daily allowance per migrant has caught the eye of the Italian mafia. Widespread arrests of purported mafia members took place in June 2015, due to their connections with setting up migrant centers.²³ Italian experts contend that the mafia is exploiting ties with other international criminal organizations to arrange smuggling of migrants into Italy in order to take advantage of welfare benefits provided by the Italian government, further complicating the burgeoning economic problems caused by the migrant crisis.²⁴

Political responses by Italy concerning the migrant crisis must be examined through two lenses: the domestic and international responses. Domestically, the migrant crisis has strained the economic resources of Italy; this has led to the electoral rise of the *Lega Nord*, or the Northern League. The Northern League is a right-wing party that is profoundly anti-immigrant.²⁵ The party's leader, Matteo Salvini, criticizes the Italian government for providing too many benefits to migrants, and he has publicly advocated that Italian citizens claim asylum in order to cash in on the benefits provided to the migrants in Italy.²⁶ Salvini's vitriolic rhetoric reflects a growing unrest throughout the country. In July 2015, protests erupted outside of Rome in the suburb of Casale San Nicola against the migrant presence in the area.²⁷ Fourteen police officers were injured,

²² Moloney, "Booming Migrant Business," *Wall Street Journal*.

²³ "Italy Arrests 44 in Migrant Centre Probe," BBC, June 4, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-33009027>.

²⁴ Ludovica Iocinno, "Mediterranean Migrant Crisis: Human Smuggling Arranged 'By Global Mafia Via Skype and WhatsApp,'" *International Business Times*, April 24, 2015, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/mediterranean-migrant-crisis-human-smuggling-arranged-by-global-mafia-via-skype-whatsapp-1498209>.

²⁵ Stephanie Kirchgaessner, "Rightwing Northern League Makes Gains in Italian Elections," *Guardian*, June 1, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/01/northern-league-gains-italian-elections-matteo-salvini>.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Nick Squires, "Violent Clashes Break Out in Rome as Italian Opposition to Migrants Increases," *Telegraph*, July 17, 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/italy/11747106/Violent-clashes-break-out-in-Rome-as-Italian-opposition-to-migrants-increases.html>.

and the 19 migrants located in the town were escorted out under police protection.²⁸ Similar protests and demonstrations have occurred throughout Italy since 2013, spurred by “openly neo-fascist” political parties like *CasaPound* and *Forza Nuova*.²⁹

While the Italian government must contend with a tumultuous domestic political situation, it must also deal with the European Union on the international level. The European Union’s responses to the migrant crisis continue to evolve, and rifts within the union have emerged. In June 2015, a frustrated Italian government floated the possibility, perhaps as a veiled threat, that unless the European Union defined an arrangement to share the costs of migration, Italy would issue visas to migrants to allow them to travel throughout the Schengen zone to wealthier EU member states.³⁰ Italian prime Minister Matteo Renzi also threatened to not allow docking of ships that rescued migrants, forcing them to other EU member state ports.³¹ In October 2015, the rifts appeared to grow wider as Renzi criticized EU Council President Donald Tusk’s comments on the Italian response to the migrant crisis.³²

The EU has been slow to adequately respond to the migrant crisis. In September 2015, the EU agreed to a plan to redistribute 160,000 migrants from Italy and Greece to the rest of the union’s member states over a two-year period.³³ As of March 2016, only 660 refugees were relocated from Greece and Italy to other EU nations under this program.³⁴ The program’s progress thus far has been slow-moving, but even more

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Carol Massimo, “Immigrant Surge Bring Out Italy’s Dark Side,” *Newsweek*, October 19, 2015, <http://www.newsweek.com/immigrant-surge-brings-out-italys-dark-side-384925>.

³⁰ Ian Traynor, “Italy Threatens to Give Schengen Visas to Migrants as EU Ministers Meet,” *Guardian*, June 16, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/15/italy-threatens-to-give-schengen-visas-to-migrants-as-eu-dispute-deepens>.

³¹ Ibid.

³² “Don’t Run Down Italy’s Refugee Effort, Angry Renzi Tells EU Boss,” Reuters, October 16, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/10/16/europe-migrants-renzi-idUSL8N12G01120151016#xgTaphp8uqX5PM22.97>.

³³ Giada Zampano, Anna Molin, and Valentina Pop, “EU Migrant Distribution Plan Kicks Off as Italy Flies 19 Eritreans to Sweden,” *Wall Street Journal*, October 9, 2015, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/italy-flies-19-eritrean-migrants-to-resettle-in-sweden-1444385837>.

³⁴ Jon Henley, “EU Refugee Relocation Scheme Is Inadequate and Will Continue to Fail,” *Guardian*, March 4, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/mar/04/eu-refugee-relocation-scheme-inadequate-will-continue-to-fail>.

migrants and refugees are expected to arrive in the coming years. This is a source of political contention not only between Italy and the EU, but also between the EU and many other migrant crisis frontline nations. This crisis threatens the viability of free movement in the European Union's Schengen zone unless a political solution can be agreed upon in the near future.³⁵

This thesis is organized as follows. Chapter II presents an introduction to the Mediterranean migrant crisis through an examination of Italy's humanitarian response, Operation *Mare Nostrum*, and its EU successor mission, Operation Sophia. Chapter II also outlines additional measures for crisis management, including the possible involvement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Chapter III examines the costs of the Italian response to the crisis within the larger context of the Italian economy. This chapter underscores the need for greater European Union integration and defense burden sharing as a potential remedy to the current migrant crisis, as well as foreseeable security and economic crises to come. Chapter IV considers how the migrant crisis has affected Italian politics.

Chapter V investigates the prospect of refugee economic integration and assesses efforts to promote such integration by the Italian government. This chapter highlights the problems of the Italian immigration system, as well as Italy's interactions with the European Union on immigration matters. This chapter makes a case for greater economic integration of migrants and refugees in Italy, and reviews possible policy proposals to alleviate some of the problems that Italy has encountered in its relationship with the European Union regarding immigration matters. Chapter VI offers conclusions.

³⁵ Matthew Holehouse, "Migrant Crisis: European Council President Tusk Warns Schengen on Brink of Collapse," *Telegraph*, November 13, 2015, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/eu/11991098/Migrant-crisis-Donald-Tusk-warns-that-Schengen-is-on-brink-of-collapse-latest-news.html>.

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II. ITALIAN AND EUROPEAN MILITARY RESPONSE TO THE MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANT CRISIS

Between January and July 2016, 2,505 migrants drowned in the Mediterranean Sea.³⁶ Since the beginning of 2016, nearly 80,000 migrants have arrived in Europe via the Mediterranean Sea.³⁷ Both figures roughly follow the numbers of the previous year. The European Union's response to this crisis continues to evolve, and no unified political solution is likely in the near future. The burgeoning crisis and resulting grim deaths raise the following questions: What factors facilitate migration to Italy via the Mediterranean? How has Italy responded to the simultaneous border security and humanitarian crisis? What has the European Union's response been thus far to the Mediterranean Crisis? Examination of the causal factors of migration and the resulting frenzied European Union response is a necessary step to formulate more effective policies that better handle the crisis and hold the possibility of saving more lives.

A. LIBYA AND NATO INTERVENTION

Since 80% of Italy-bound migrants who crossed the Mediterranean in 2015 departed from Libyan shores, it is necessary to examine what factors make Libya a popular point of departure for those brave enough to make the journey.³⁸ Libya, in its current form, constitutes a failed state. The recognized Libyan government does not, and cannot, maintain a monopoly on the use of force within Libya's borders. In September 2015, the U.S. State Department issued a warning to all U.S. citizens in Libya, advising them to leave immediately due to the risk of terrorist attacks against U.S. interests, which the Libyan government cannot prevent, because "various militias have supplanted the

³⁶ "International Organization for Migration," International Organization for Migration, Last modified July 15, 2016, <http://www.iom.int/>.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Altai Consulting, "Migration Trends Across the Mediterranean: Connecting the Dots," International Organization for Migration, June 2015, http://www.altaiconsulting.com/docs/migration/Altai_Migration_trends_across_the_Mediterranean.pdf.

police in maintaining internal security.”³⁹ In August 2015, Italian Foreign Minister Paolo Gentiloni stated that if the then-pending Libyan peace talks did not succeed, then “we will find ourselves with another Somalia two steps from our coasts.”⁴⁰ Without an effective army or police force, Libya cannot govern its territory, much less stop or inhibit irregular mass migration from its shores.

How did the situation in Libya come to this point? To answer this question, one must look back to when the state lost the monopoly of the use of force. By no means a benevolent dictator, Muammar Ghadafi maintained control over Libya through the support of various militias and committees that he supplied with money and weapons.⁴¹ While propping up the various militias, Ghadafi decidedly neglected his army and left his country bereft of a capable and functioning bureaucracy.⁴² Ghadafi held power because he negated the likelihood of any credible threat to his rule by keeping the state and its security apparatus fragmented and impotent. Libya found itself, like many Arab countries of the time, caught up in the Arab Spring in February 2011.⁴³ The Ghadafi regime proceeded to incur battles with various rebel groups, and reports of the conflict, though later proven to be false, declared that Ghadafi went on a rampage and slaughtered civilians by the thousands.⁴⁴ These reports precipitated NATO action in March 2011.⁴⁵

³⁹ “Libya Travel Warning,” U.S. Passports and International Travel, U.S. Department of State: Bureau of Consular Affairs, September 16, 2015, <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/libya-travel-warning.html>.

⁴⁰ “Italy’s Gentiloni: Deal in Libya Urgently Needed To Avoid Launching Full-Fledged Counterterror Op,” Open Source Center, United States Government, August 17, 2015, https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_200_203_121123_43/content/Display/EUN2015081733845996#index=9&searchKey=19981130&rpp=10.

⁴¹ Barak Barfi, “What’s Really Holding Libya Back,” *NATO Review*, accessed August 17, 2015, <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2014/also-in-2014/What-is-really-holding-Libya-back/EN/index.htm>.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Alan J. Kuperman, “Obama’s Libya Debacle,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2015, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/libya/2015-02-16/obamas-libya-debacle>.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ “Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR Protection of Civilians and Civilian-Populated Areas & Enforcement of the No-Fly Zone,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, October 2011, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_10/20111005_111005-factsheet_protection_civilians.pdf.

In accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973, NATO took control of international forces and began Operation Unified Protector on March 31, 2011.⁴⁶ UNSCR 1973 granted NATO the ability to “take all necessary measures . . . to protect civilians” in Libya.⁴⁷ An initial NATO arms embargo and no-fly zone in Libya evolved to include “over 9,000 strike sorties” that destroyed “over 5,900 military targets.”⁴⁸ After months of continued strikes by participating NATO allies and partners, rebel forces removed Ghadafi’s hold on power in August 2011.⁴⁹ Compared to other major NATO operations, Operation Unified Protector was inexpensive and short.⁵⁰ The NATO-led operation did not entail the use of ground forces, as this contingency was outside of the scope of UNSCR 1973.⁵¹ Then-NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen offered Libya the prospect of technical assistance in the form of “defense and security sector reform.”⁵² Marking the formal end of Operation Unified Protector on October 31, 2011, Rasmussen made an historic visit to Libya to tout NATO success. In a press conference with the leader of the National Transitional Council, Mustafa Abdul Jalil, Rasmussen congratulated the Libyan people on their hard-won freedom, and praised their efforts to begin building “a new Libya, based on freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and reconciliation.”⁵³ Sadly, the aftermath of NATO’s intervention in Libya could not be further from Rasmussen’s hopeful vision.

⁴⁶ David S. Yost, *NATO’s Balancing Act*, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2014), 172.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ “Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR Protection of Civilians and Civilian-Populated Areas & Enforcement of the No-Fly Zone,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, October 2011, http://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2011_10/20111005_111005-factsheet_protection_civilians.pdf.

⁴⁹ Yost, *NATO’s Balancing Act*, 176.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 178.

⁵¹ Ibid., 170.

⁵² Anders Fogh Rasmussen quoted in David S. Yost, *NATO’s Balancing Act*, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2014), 177.

⁵³ “NATO Secretary General Makes Historic Libya Trip,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Last modified November 1, 2011, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_80100.htm.

B. SETTING THE STAGE FOR THE MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANT CRISIS

In December 2012, Russian president Vladimir Putin assessed the situation in Libya by stating that “the state is falling apart. . . . Interethnic, interclan, and intertribal conflicts continue.”⁵⁴ Today, Libya sees its oil-rich eastern region claiming autonomy, two different factions claiming the right of governance, the rise of ISIS and other Islamist militias, and four prime ministers in the course of the last four years.⁵⁵ Reprisal killings by rebels began directly after Ghadafi’s exit from power, and have increased in number every year since Ghadafi’s demise.⁵⁶ The United Nations estimates that approximately 400,000 Libyans have fled their homes since 2011, while oil production is but a fraction of what it was before the NATO intervention.⁵⁷ Kidnappings are on the rise, and various militias continue to fight each other, and kill civilians in the process.⁵⁸ The United Nations called for a ceasefire in August 2015, in an attempt to negotiate a peaceful agreement between warring factions.⁵⁹ As of July 2016, Libya still faces the reality of a divided and incapable government, in spite of UN efforts and widespread international recognition of the Government of National Accord.⁶⁰ Continued disagreements between the internationally recognized government and the unofficial government suggest that the near-term prospects for peace are remote.⁶¹ Libya’s new problems add to those of an already troubled region.

⁵⁴ Vladimir Putin quoted in David S. Yost, *NATO’s Balancing Act*, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2014), 177.

⁵⁵ Kuperman, “Obama’s Libya Debacle.”

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ “Freedom in the World 2015: Libya,” Freedom House, accessed September 15, 2015, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2015/libya>.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ “Libya PM Urges Unity for Fractured Country,” *al-Arabiya*, July 18, 2016, <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/middle-east/2016/07/18/Libya-PM-urges-unity-for-fractured-country.html>.

⁶¹ Aziz El Yaakoubi, “Libyan Peace Talks Disrupted Again After Faction Negotiator Quits,” Reuters, August 27, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/08/27/us-libya-security-idUSKCN0QW1TI20150827>.

Libya borders many countries rated as “not free” by Freedom House, including Algeria, Chad, and Egypt.⁶² Sudan, one of the most oppressive states in the world, shares Libya’s southeast border.⁶³ Eritrea borders Sudan, which constitutes another of the world’s most repressive regimes, and the failed state of Somalia lies further east.⁶⁴ The Syrian Civil War continues to disperse hundreds of thousands of Syrians across the world, including Egypt, which shares Libya’s eastern border.⁶⁵ Many people from these countries entered Libya while Ghadafi held power, in hopes of reaching Europe via the Mediterranean Sea.⁶⁶ According to Freedom House’s 2011 Report on Libya:

Human rights organizations have documented and criticized the country’s treatment of these migrants, including forced repatriation of detainees to countries where they are at high risk of torture and mistreatment by their home governments. Following a 2009 agreement between Libya and Italy on joint naval operations to stop illegal migration, there have been reports of Libyan authorities firing live ammunition at boats they believe to be carrying illegal migrants.⁶⁷

In 2010, the European Union entered into agreement with Ghadafi to provide €60 million over three years to “assist” Libya in its efforts to modernize its immigration infrastructure, an agreement that seems to have been calculated to encourage Libyan authorities to limit migration to Europe.⁶⁸ Critics of this agreement asserted that the European Union was outsourcing its responsibilities concerning global asylum-seekers, and effective migrant relocation, to a country with a terrible human rights record.⁶⁹ The NATO-aided removal of Ghadafi from power, the ensuing failure of the successor Libyan

⁶² “Freedom in the World: Discarding Democracy: Return to the Iron Fist,” Freedom House, accessed September 1, 2015, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/freedom-world-2015#.Vf3z199Vikp>.

⁶³ “Freedom in the World: Discarding Democracy,” Freedom House.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Altai Consulting, “Migration Trends,” International Organization for Migration.

⁶⁶ “Freedom in the World 2011: Libya,” Freedom House, accessed September 4, 2015, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2011/libya>.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ “European Commission and Libya Agree a Migration Cooperation Agenda During High Level Visit to Boost EU-Libya Relations,” Press Release Database, European Commission, October 5, 2010, [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-10-472_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-10-472_en.htm?locale=en).

⁶⁹ Bjarte Vandvik, “The EU’s Dubious Refugee Deal,” *Guardian*, October 20, 2010, <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/oct/20/eu-refugee-libya-gaddafi>.

government, and the added factor of despotic and repressive governments in the region culminated in Libya becoming the gateway to Europe for hundreds of thousands of people seeking a better life. The conditions all led to the Mediterranean migrant crisis.

C. ITALIAN RESPONSE TO THE MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANT CRISIS

As Libya experienced conflict that turned into a civil war, thousands of migrants from across Africa and the Middle East began converging on the war-torn country in 2013 to make the perilous journey to Italy. Approximately 60,000 people reached Europe via the Mediterranean Sea in 2013, and most of them landed in Italy.⁷⁰ Europe found itself thoroughly unprepared for the onslaught of migrants, and Italy bore the brunt of the crisis, as its southernmost territory of Lampedusa lies only 183 miles from Tripoli, Libya. By September 2013, Lampedusa, an island with only 6,000 inhabitants, found itself inundated with over 1,300 migrants.⁷¹ Lampedusa had room for only 850 migrants in what essentially amounted to a detention camp, and conditions became abhorrent.⁷² Migrants began openly protesting in the streets, which infuriated natives and pushed them to a violent response.⁷³ Eventually, officials transferred the migrants to prison ships and other Italian facilities.⁷⁴

Italy reached a major turning point in its response to the Mediterranean migrant crisis when tragedy struck and compelled the government to become proactive in its response. In October 2013, over 300 migrants perished off the coast of Lampedusa when a boat of 500 migrants capsized.⁷⁵ This event galvanized public opinion in Italy, and the

⁷⁰ “Mapping Mediterranean Migration,” BBC, September 15, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-24521614>.

⁷¹ Jeffrey Tayler, “Amid Record Waves of Refugees, Italy Finding Limits to Its Compassion,” *National Geographic*, October 30, 2014, <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/special-features/2014/10/141031-italy-immigration-crisis-human-trafficking/>.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Adam Taylor, “Italy Ran an Operation that Saved Thousands of Migrants from Drowning in the Mediterranean. Why Did it Stop?” *Washington Post*, April 20, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/04/20/italy-ran-an-operation-that-save-thousands-of-migrants-from-drowning-in-the-mediterranean-why-did-it-stop/>.

Italian Navy initiated Operation *Mare Nostrum* within a matter of days of the “*tragedia di Lampedusa*.”⁷⁶

Mare Nostrum was a well-equipped and robust crisis-response operation that saved upwards of 150,000 migrants.⁷⁷ At a cost of €9 million per month of operation, the Italian Navy not only rescued migrants, but seized human traffickers’ motherships, and captured 330 alleged human traffickers.⁷⁸ The force composition of *Mare Nostrum* is an important element to examine for possible future missions. It constituted the following elements:

- One amphibious vessel with specific command and control features, [plus] medical and shelter facilities for the would-be migrants;
- One [or] two frigates and two second line high seas units—either patrollers or corvettes—with wide range and medical care capabilities;
- Helicopters onboard (to be readily deployed to Lampedusa or Catania);
- A SAN MARCO Marine Brigade team in charge of vessel inspections and the safety of migrants onboard;
- A Coastal radar network and Italian Navy AIS (Automatic Identification System) shore stations;
- One ATLANTIC 1 Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) based in Sigonella for maritime patrol;
- One Air Force PREDATOR A+ based in Sigonella for maritime patrol;
- One MM P180 aircraft equipped with Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR), based in Catania;
- Two Camcopter S-100 unmanned aerial vehicles onboard ITS [Italian Ship] *San Giusto*;
- One Forward Logistic Site (FLS) in Lampedusa for logistics support to the units deployed to *Mare Nostrum*.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Tayler, “Amid Record Waves of Refugees,” *National Geographic*.

⁷⁷ “Operation Mare Nostrum,” *Marina Militare, Ministero Della Difesa*, accessed August 28, 2015, <http://www.marina.difesa.it/EN/operations/Pagine/MareNostrum.aspx>.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Despite the success of *Mare Nostrum*, the Italian government stopped the operation in October 2014.⁸⁰ The Italian Interior Minister, Angelina Alfano, stated during the announcement of the operation's conclusion that "*Mare Nostrum* is closing down because it was an emergency operation." However, the emergency was far from winding down.⁸¹ The real reason that Rome shut down *Mare Nostrum* probably revolved around the fact that Italy paid for the operation almost entirely by itself. The EU contribution to *Mare Nostrum* totaled a paltry sum of €1.8 million, which constituted only 2% of the overall cost of the operation.⁸² A second reason that the operation shut down was probably the perception that by operating successful search-and-rescue missions, Italy encouraged more migrants to make the journey.⁸³ The British Foreign Office made this case when Lady Anelay announced that "we do not support planned search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean," reasoning that rescue missions were "an unintended 'pull factor', encouraging more migrants to attempt the dangerous sea crossing and thereby leading to more tragic and unnecessary deaths."⁸⁴ History would be quick to disprove this notion.

D. FRONTEX "OPERATION TRITON" AND MORE TRAGEDY

The ending of *Mare Nostrum* compelled EU action, though the resulting mission rollout revealed a disjointed effort. In late September 2014, as the shutdown of *Mare Nostrum* became evident, EU officials met with Italian authorities to formulate a successor mission to the highly successful *Mare Nostrum*.⁸⁵ The official announcement of a European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External

⁸⁰ Taylor, "Italy Ran an Operation that Saved Thousands of Migrants," *Washington Post*.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² "Frontex Joint Operation 'Triton'—Concerted Efforts to Manage Migration in the Central Mediterranean," Press Release Database, European Commission, October 7, 2014, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-566_en.htm.

⁸³ Alan Travis, "UK Axes Support for Mediterranean Migrant Rescue Operation," *Guardian*, October 27, 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/oct/27/uk-mediterranean-migrant-rescue-plan>.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ "Frontex Launches Call for Participation of the EU Member States in Joint Operation Triton," Frontex, September 26, 2014, <http://frontex.europa.eu/news/frontex-launches-call-for-participation-of-the-eu-member-states-in-joint-operation-triton-b9nupQ>.

Borders of the Member States of the European Union (FRONTEX) mission accompanied an ambiguous closing statement.⁸⁶ The statement concluded that “while saving lives is an absolute priority in in all maritime operations coordinated by FRONTEX, the focus of Joint Operation Triton will be primarily border management.”⁸⁷ Operation Triton appeared to have more limited objectives than had *Mare Nostrum*.

Operation Triton officially began on November 1, 2014. The budget and force composition made it clear that it would be nowhere near the scope of *Mare Nostrum*, with a monthly budget of only €2.9 million, compared to *Mare Nostrum*’s €12 million monthly operating budget.⁸⁸ A smaller budget dictated fewer available assets, as the FRONTEX operation requested “two fixed-wing surveillance aircraft [and] three patrol vessels, as well as seven teams of guest officers for debriefing/intelligence gathering and screening/identification purposes.”⁸⁹ The operation was intended to supplement Italian efforts after *Mare Nostrum*, with the EU explicitly stating that Italy would need to continue its own national efforts to manage the crisis.⁹⁰ The Italian Navy made clear that it would respond to distress calls, but it was also clear that the days of 24-hour response from readily available assets would dwindle.⁹¹ With a reduced budget and asset availability, Operation Triton’s Area of Responsibility would pale in comparison to *Mare Nostrum*. The Italian operation included going up to the edge of Libyan national waters, while Operation Triton would go no further than 30 nautical miles off the Italian coast.⁹²

Speculation about the success of Operation Triton started before the operation began. Enrique Naegali of *Foreign Affairs Review* contended that as conflict in North Africa and the Middle East intensified, even more migrants would make the trip across

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Travis, “UK Axes Support for Mediterranean Migrant Rescue Operation,” *Guardian*.

⁸⁹ “Frontex Joint Operation ‘Triton,’” European Commission, October 7, 2014.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ “Operation Triton: Europe’s Mediterranean Border Patrol,” BBC, November 13, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30039044>.

⁹² “Operation Triton: Europe’s Mediterranean Border Patrol,” BBC, November 13, 2014, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-30039044>.

the Mediterranean, and predicted that this would either exhaust Operation Triton's budget or cause a greater humanitarian crisis.⁹³ UN Migration Envoy representative Peter Sutherland expressed doubts about the range of the operation, saying that it could lead to greater loss of life.⁹⁴ Judith Sunderland of Human Rights Watch contended that "the limited range and border enforcement mandate of Operation Triton are no substitute for *Mare Nostrum*," further adding that "if the EU is serious about preventing future tragedies, it needs to give Triton the mandate and resources to rescue boats throughout the Mediterranean."⁹⁵ More pointed criticism came from Fillipo Miraglia of the *Associazione Ricreativa e Culturale Italiana* (ARCI), an Italian activist group that aids migrants: "Triton won't stop the arrival of migrants, nor will it avoid their slaughter out at sea."⁹⁶ All of this speculation and criticism occurred as the migration season wound down in the Mediterranean during the winter; the effectiveness of Operation Triton would not be tested until the migration season began again in March 2015.⁹⁷

The beginning of the migration season in early 2015 saw deaths in the Mediterranean Sea increase by tenfold compared to the same period of observation in 2014.⁹⁸ Worse weather and the greater overcrowding of boats by human traffickers sent more people to their deaths.⁹⁹ On April 19, 2015, with the migration season well underway, a boat suspected of carrying well over 700 migrants capsized, and the Italian coast guard recovered only 28 migrants from the disaster.¹⁰⁰ Operation Triton, coupled with reduced Italian naval presence, confirmed that the fears expressed by many human

⁹³ Erika Naegali, "Mare Europaeum: Is Operation Triton Enough?" *Foreign Affairs Review*, December 2, 2014, <http://foreignaffairsreview.co.uk/2014/12/mare-triton/>.

⁹⁴ "Operation Triton," BBC, November 13, 2014.

⁹⁵ Liam Moloney, "Migrant Aid Groups Criticize End to Italy's Sea Rescue Operation," *Wall Street Journal*, October 31, 2014, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/migrant-aid-groups-criticize-end-to-italys-sea-rescue-operation-1414782121>.

⁹⁶ Moloney, "Migrant Aid Groups Criticize End to Italy's Sea Rescue Operation," *Wall Street Journal*.

⁹⁷ "Operation Triton," BBC, November 13, 2014.

⁹⁸ "The Worst Yet? Refugees in the Mediterranean," *Economist*, April 19, 2015, <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21648896-another-boat-capsizes-between-libya-and-italy-europe-debates-migration-policy-worst-drowning-yet>.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

rights activists were well-founded. The suspension of the suspected “pull” factor of safe transit provided by the Italian Navy, which ceased before the 2015 migration season, did not inhibit more migrants from making the journey across the Mediterranean. The April 19, 2015, tragedy, along with mounting international criticism, would lead to an even greater European Union response, spearheaded by Italy.

E. CREATION OF EUNAVFOR MED, ITS MISSION, COSTS, AND CHALLENGES

One day after the drowning of over 700 migrants in the Mediterranean, the European Council expressed “a strong commitment to act in order to prevent human tragedies resulting from the smuggling of people across the Mediterranean.”¹⁰¹ Three days later, the European Council committed to increasing the presence of the European Union in the Mediterranean, with the highest priority given to preventing more migrants from perishing at sea.¹⁰² On May 18, 2015, the European Council officially created European Union Naval Forces Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR Med), charged with the mission of disrupting the business model of smugglers and human traffickers.¹⁰³ EUNAVFOR Med’s mission would transpire over three phases: the first phase entailed the gathering of intelligence about human trafficking networks; the second phase, currently underway, involves boarding, seizing, or diverting suspected trafficking vessels; and the third phase will entail destroying or disabling suspected vessels used by human traffickers.¹⁰⁴ The forces under operational control of EUNAVFOR Med will continue to respond to distress calls, in addition to meeting the aforementioned mission objectives. The last phase will require either a UN Security Council Resolution, or consent by the vessel’s parent nation to board or destroy a suspected vessel.¹⁰⁵ The original mandate for EUNAVFOR Med was one year after commencement of the operation, and the mission

¹⁰¹ Council of the European Union, “COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2015/778 of 18 May 2015 on a European Union Military Operation in the Southern Central Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR MED),” EUR-lex, May 18, 2015, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32015D0778>.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid

was re-named Operation Sophia.¹⁰⁶ Just a month before the operation reached its expiry date, on June 20, 2016, the European Council announced that it would extend Operation's Sophia's mandate by one year until the end of July 2017.¹⁰⁷

In contrast with FRONTEX Operation Triton, Operation Sophia boasts robust participation from EU Member States, including the Czech Republic, France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Spain, the United Kingdom, and nominal contributions by other member states.¹⁰⁸ Financially, the common costs for the start-up and one year mandate are €1.82 million, with additional contributions made by participating member states.¹⁰⁹ The force composition of Operation Sophia is also much more robust than that of Operation Triton, as it includes the employment of one aircraft carrier, eight surface and sub-surface units, and twelve aircraft.¹¹⁰ Phase one of Operation Sophia formally commenced on June 22, 2015.¹¹¹

Operation Sophia faces many obstacles to its success, which are both inherent to the mission and external. First, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon expressed doubt over the dual objectives of the mission, specifically saving migrants while firing on vessels used by human traffickers.¹¹² Ban Ki-Moon's concern is primarily for the safety of the migrants caught in the potential crossfire from EU Naval Forces and

¹⁰⁶ "EU Mounts New Maritime Operation to Tackle Mediterranean People Traffickers," European Parliament, June 5, 2015, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2015/559489/EPRS_ATA%282015%29559489_EN.pdf.

¹⁰⁷ "EUNAVFOR MED Operation Sophia: Mandate Extended By One Year, Two New Tasks Added," European Council, June 20, 2016, http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/06/20-fac-eunavfor-med-sophia/?utm_source=dsms-auto&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EUNAVFOR%20MED%20Operation%20Sophia%3A%20mandate%20extended%20by%20one%20year%2C%20two%20new%20tasks%20added.

¹⁰⁸ "European Union Naval Force—Mediterranean," European Union-External Action, accessed on September 1, 2015, http://eeas.europa.eu/factsheets/docs/eunavfor_med_factsheet_en.pdf.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ "EUNAVFOR MED," European Union- External Action, accessed on September 17, 2015, http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/eunavfor-med/index_en.htm.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² "EU Naval Force EUNAVFOR MED Set Sail in Troubled Waters," Centre for European Policy Studies, June 26, 2015, http://www.ceps.eu/system/files/CEPS%20Commentary%20EUNAVFOR%20G%20Faleg%20S%20Blockmans_0.pdf.

human traffickers.¹¹³ A second concern is the political feasibility of moving to the third phase of operations, which would require a UN Security Council Resolution or an invitation by the Libyan government.¹¹⁴ A unified Libyan government is essentially non-existent, and contending factions are currently attempting to negotiate a unified government.¹¹⁵ Efforts to gain approval for a UN Security Council Resolution to authorize the use of force against human traffickers face opposition from Russia and China.¹¹⁶ A third challenge to the success of the Operation Sophia mission is the ability to distinguish between smuggling vessels and commercial or fishing vessels.¹¹⁷ The vessels used by the human traffickers are remarkably varied; to ensure that there are no inadvertent migrant casualties, EU Naval Forces would have to evacuate the vessels completely before scuttling them. The fourth concern is that the mission does not address the causal factors underlying the Mediterranean migrant crisis, which include an unstable North Africa and Middle East.¹¹⁸

When the European Council extended the mandate of Operation Sophia in June 2016, it also expanded the scope of the operation. In addition to the initial three phases, the Council added two new tasks: to train a new Libyan coastguard and to interdict arms shipments to the war-torn country.¹¹⁹ Since Libya does not have a functioning government, it also lacks the capacity to conduct maritime search-and-rescue operations. The new task of training a Libyan coastguard will likely meet failure if a political

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ “European Union Naval Forces- Mediterranean: Operation Sophia,” European Union- External Action, July 1, 2016, http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/eunavfor-med/pdf/factsheet_eunavfor_med_en.pdf.

¹¹⁵ Yaakoubi, “Libyan Peace Talks Disrupted Again After Faction Negotiator Quits,” Reuters.

¹¹⁶ Colum Lynch, “China and Russia Want Limits on Europe’s Use of Force Against Migrant Smugglers,” *Foreign Policy* (blog), September 11, 2015, http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/09/11/china-and-russia-want-limits-on-europes-use-of-force-against-migrant-smugglers/?wp_login_redirect=0.

¹¹⁷ “A Splash of Bravado: Elusive Aims for EU Naval Mission,” *Economist*, May 21, 2015, <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21651875-elusive-aims-eu-naval-mission-splash-bravado>.

¹¹⁸ “Irish Editorial Warns EU Losing Its Way Over Humanitarian Values Amid Migrant Crisis,” Open Source Center, United States Government, August 7, 2015, https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_200_203_121123_43/content/Display/EUL2015080729863668#index=63&searchKey=19980496&rpp=50.

¹¹⁹ “EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia,” European Council, June 20, 2016.

solution is not reached to unify the government. Until then, government funding and control of functional law-enforcement elements, to include the coast guard, will remain dubious. The additional task of the interdiction of arms shipments is necessary due to the rise of the Libyan branch of the Islamic State of the Iraq and Levant (ISIL), but the operation's new scope will likely necessitate an expansion of operational resources and the budget.¹²⁰

Italian Admiral Enrico Credendino, who serves as the commander of Operation Sophia, acknowledged the causal factors of the crisis in a recent interview, stating that “by itself, without a global approach, the military operation cannot work. We will only be effective if, at the same time, the causes of the departures are combated, if these people [migrants] are helped to find a better life.”¹²¹ The operation has thus far succeeded in rescuing close to 16,000 migrants who might have otherwise perished.¹²² Though more robust in size, resources, and mission than Operation Triton, Operation Sophia faces many political and operational challenges that stand in the way of its success. As the Mediterranean Sea's migrant death toll for 2016 is on pace to match, or possibly exceed the numbers of 2015, it is unclear how the European Council measures the success of the operation, though it is clear that the EU Naval Force's presence is keeping the number of deaths lower than what it might be without the EU naval presence. Italy will continue to lead the mission, as it has the greatest stake in its success, though it is likely that, despite the new and concerted effort by the EU, more resources will be required to end the newfound function of the Mediterranean Sea that serves today as a nautical graveyard.

F. THE CASE FOR NATO INVOLVEMENT

The contributions that NATO made to the underlying causes of the Mediterranean crisis are substantial and undeniable. Its assistance in the removal of Ghadafi, according to

¹²⁰ “EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia,” European Council, June 20, 2016.

¹²¹ “Italian Commander of EUNAVFOR Mission Explains Mediterranean Operation ‘Not Naval Blockade,’” Open Source Center, United States Government, August 20, 2015, https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_200_203_121123_43/content/Display/EUR2015082065223430#index=1&searchKey=19985098&rpp=10.

¹²² “EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia,” European Council, June 20, 2016.

David S. Yost, “has implicated it in Libya’s future.”¹²³ Expansion of this argument includes the resulting Mediterranean migrant crisis, caused in large part by the failure and incapacity of the Libyan state to effectively govern. By intervening, NATO could help to prevent the possible security crisis that will unfold in Europe in the coming years due in part to the threat of terrorism, and the Alliance could bolster its international credibility in the aftermath of the failure of the Libyan state. Since the European Council left open the possibility of third state involvement in the EUNAVFOR Med mission, NATO can and should assist with the mission through various military and political means.

As noted earlier, one reason for NATO involvement is the security threat that terrorism poses to NATO member states and NATO partners. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg identified some of those potential threats when he stated:

to the South, we meet and we are faced with non-state threats and challenges. And that’s a much more mixed and complicated picture. We see violence, turmoil in Iraq, Syria and North Africa. We see people trying to cross the Mediterranean. And we also see terrorist attacks taking place in our streets inspired by some ISIL and other terrorist organizations in the South.¹²⁴

General Philip Breedlove, the former NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR), echoed Stoltenberg’s sentiments when he expressed concern about the possibility of extremists hiding in the mix of legitimate migrants and refugees, and crossing the Mediterranean to gain access to Europe.¹²⁵ Breedlove’s warnings were vindicated in November 2015, when a coordinated terrorist attack took place in Paris, France. Of the nine perpetrators killed in the attacks, at least one, M. al-Mahmod, entered the European Union through Greece by posing as a Syrian refugee.¹²⁶ In February 2016, German police officials thwarted a possible terrorist attack by an Algerian couple posing

¹²³ David S. Yost, *NATO’s Balancing Act*, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2014), 177.

¹²⁴ Jens Stoltenberg, “Adapting to a Change Security Environment,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, speech given on May 27, 2015, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_120166.htm.

¹²⁵ Associated Press, “NATO: Extremists May Be Among Mediterranean Migrants,” *New York Times*, May 21, 2015, http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2015/05/21/world/ap-nato-mediterranean.html?_r=1.

¹²⁶ “Paris Attacks: Who Were the Attackers?” BBC, April 27, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34832512>.

as Syrian refugees.¹²⁷ While the vast majority of refugees are fleeing war and oppression and most economic migrants are simply seeking a better life, the European Union's ability to control the flow of people into Europe is nearly non-existent.

A second reason why NATO should intervene in the migrant crisis is to salvage its international credibility following its intervention in Libya. As the migrant crisis in the Mediterranean and elsewhere worsens, the chorus of criticism blaming NATO and some of its member states for the current conditions in Libya continues to echo around the world. Criticism spans from traditional anti-Western foes like Russia to NATO member states. Russia overtly blames the West for the current chaos in Libya.¹²⁸ Vladimir Putin carries this narrative over to the migrant crisis, stating that it is yet another terrible outcome due to Western "'incorrect' foreign policy."¹²⁹ The Russian regime goes so far as to say that Europe could learn from Russia about how to handle migrants, as it took several thousand Ukrainians in from the current unrest in eastern Ukraine.¹³⁰ Czech president Milos Zeman has echoed Russian criticism by asserting that the migrant crisis stems from western meddling in the Middle East and Africa.¹³¹ The South African president, Jacob Zuma, recently and pointedly blamed Europe and NATO for the ongoing migrant crisis by flatly stating, "they [the NATO Allies] caused it. They must address it."¹³² While Austria is not a NATO member, the leader of its far-right party, Heinz-Christian Strache, after blaming NATO for the current crisis, sharply proclaimed that "the USA for decades has started fires in the Middle East and then has the chutzpah to claim that responsibility for the flood of refugees unleashed lies with Europe. That's

¹²⁷ Alison Smale, "Terrorism Suspects Are Posing as Refugees, Germany Says," *New York Times*, February 5, 2016, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/06/world/europe/germany-refugees-isis.html>.

¹²⁸ "Russia Is Feeling Under Attack From the West," Open Source Center, United States Government, August 10, 2015, https://www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_200_203_121123_43/content/Display/CER2015081138731225#index=25&searchKey=19981444&rpp=100.

¹²⁹ Emma Burrows, "Putin Blames U.S. for Migrant Crisis in Europe," *Deutsche Welle*, September 4, 2015, <http://www.dw.com/en/putin-blames-us-for-migrant-crisis-in-europe/a-18694852>.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ "Western Interference in Middle East Resulted in EU Migrant Crisis," Sputnik, August, 2, 2015, <http://sputniknews.com/europe/20150802/1025329630.html>.

¹³² Shannon Ebrahim, "Zuma Slates Europe Over Migrant Crisis," IOL, September 16, 2015, <http://www.iol.co.za/news/politics/zuma-slates-europe-over-migrant-crisis-1.1916780#.Vf4Esd9Vikp>.

geostrategic detribalization at its finest.”¹³³ After the body of a two-year-old Syrian boy washed up on Turkish shores in early September 2015 and made international headlines, Turkish president Recep Erdogan said without hesitation, “to be honest, the whole Western world is to be blamed, in my opinion, on this issue.”¹³⁴ As the photos of dead migrants continue to make international headlines, NATO must consider its role in the current crisis, as well as its future role as an internationally credible military organization. The NATO brand has definitely been tarnished by Libya’s post-Ghadafi condition and the Mediterranean migrant crisis, and it is in thorough need of re-branding. In response to an interviewer’s question as to the “worst mistake” of his presidency, President Obama said that it was “probably failing to plan for the day after, what I think was the right thing to do, in intervening in Libya.”¹³⁵ By the president’s own admission, Libya is now a “mess.”¹³⁶

G. HOW CAN NATO HELP EUROPE?

European Council Decision 2015/778, which launched EUNAVFOR Med, stated that:

Without prejudice to the [European] Union’s decision-making autonomy or to the single institutional framework, and in accordance with the relevant guidelines of the European Council, third States may be invited to participate in the operation... Third States making significant military contributions to EUNAVFOR MED shall have the same rights and obligations in terms of day-to-day management of the operation as Member States taking part in the operation.¹³⁷

¹³³ [Michael Shields](http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/09/05/us-europe-migrants-austria-strache-idUSKCN0R50HP20150905) and Shadia Nasralla, “Austrian Far-right Leader Blames U.S., NATO for Migrant Crisis,” Reuters, September 5, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/09/05/us-europe-migrants-austria-strache-idUSKCN0R50HP20150905>.

¹³⁴ Don Melvin, “West to Blame for Europe’s Migrant Crisis, say Erdogan, Putin,” CNN, September 4, 2015, <http://www.cnn.com/2015/09/04/middleeast/turkey-russia-blame-west-migrant-crisis/>.

¹³⁵ “President Obama: Libya Aftermath ‘Worst’ Mistake of Presidency,” BBC, April 11, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-36013703>.

¹³⁶ Jeffrey Goldberg, “The Obama Doctrine,” *Atlantic*, April 2016, <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/the-obama-doctrine/471525/>.

¹³⁷ European Parliament, Common Foreign and Security Policy, *COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2015/778 of 18 May 2015 on a European Union Military Operation in the Southern Central Mediterranean (EUNAVFOR MED)* (Brussels, Belgium: May 18, 2015).

Under these auspices, NATO member-states could assist the European Union in its current mission. If the logistics or political feasibility of this option were not sustainable, then a second option through which NATO could assist in the migrant crisis is through the expansion of Operation Sea Guardian.¹³⁸ This operation is a renaming of the original Operation Active Endeavor, which started as an Article 5 operation in the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, and evolved into Operation Sea Guardian, which continues to serve as a detection and disruption operation against terrorism in the Mediterranean, among other mission capabilities.¹³⁹

Due to the threat of terrorism posed by the migrant influx, NATO resources could be brought to bear to aid Europe by ramping up Operation Sea Guardian. This would assist the EU through the employment of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance air assets, and could also provide more naval assets to aid with search and rescue requirements in the interim. This would not necessarily be limited to NATO member states, but could be extended to the NATO partners that assisted with Operation Unified Protector and other NATO partners. These actions could serve as quick ways for NATO to increase support and provide additional resources for Operation Sophia. Such military aid should be accompanied by European Union efforts to effectively screen and document all the people rescued from the Mediterranean Sea. This would, at a minimum, entail the building of a vast array of refugee/migrant identification centers and shelters, which would be located in European Union member states or partner nations. In addition to serving as an operation of humanitarian assistance as well as migratory control, the mission could also serve as a means of addressing European domestic political concerns. The fear pervades many Europeans that the EU has little control over the migrant crisis, which is essentially true. Such an expansion of NATO activities in the Mediterranean Sea could assuage rising unease among much of the European public, an advantage explored in Chapter IV.

¹³⁸ “Warsaw Summit Communiqué,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, July 9, 2016, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_133169.htm.

¹³⁹ “Operation Active Endeavor,” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, last modified March 26, 2015, http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/topics_7932.htm.

Recognizing the possibility of assistance to the European Union, NATO is beginning to lay the foundation for possible aid to Operation Sophia. In the July 2016 Warsaw Communiqué, NATO leaders stated that:

We have agreed, in principle, on a possible NATO role in the Central Mediterranean, to complement and/or, upon European Union request, support, as appropriate, the EU's Operation Sophia through the provision of a range of capabilities including Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, and logistics support; through contribution to capacity building of the Libyan coastguard and navy, if requested by the legitimate Libyan authorities and/or the EU; and in the context of the implementation of UNSCR 2292 on the situation in Libya, in close coordination with the EU.¹⁴⁰

NATO needs to sharpen its focus when looking to the future. Libya will need vast amounts of help as far as institution building is concerned, and NATO should establish a working group to begin planning for such assistance now. This working group could solicit resource allocations from member states, define mission goals and limitations, and devise an effective training plan for Libyan security forces. The foundational work for such a mission today could entail a rapid deployment of such forces if and when requested by the Libyan government in the future. Along these lines, the Alliance should establish a second working group to discuss and plan possible peace-keeping missions in Libya by NATO, or to consider what member states could contribute in the event of a UNSC-mandated and UN-led peace-keeping mission, though the likelihood of the latter scenario is remote at best. Whether NATO decides to aid the EU-led Operation Sophia or stays on the sidelines, Italy will likely play a key role, as it has the most at stake concerning the stability of Libya in the immediate and foreseeable future.

¹⁴⁰ "Warsaw Summit Communiqué," NATO.

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III. THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE MIGRANT CRISIS ON ITALY

Matteo Renzi, the prime minister of Italy, told a crowd at the World Economic Forum in January 2015 that “I am not here to present a future of tomorrow. For my country, the future is today, not tomorrow.”¹⁴¹ There is perhaps no more apt phrase to describe the current Italian economic situation. The Italian present is filled with numerous problems; unless resolution is found today, Italy’s tomorrow is uncertain at best. One fact rings true at present and in the immediate future for Italy: due to stagnant economic growth and the pressures of austerity, Italy does not possess the capability or resources to adequately respond, through all national facets of power, to the burgeoning humanitarian crisis off its coast for an indefinite period of time. Italy’s anemic economy, coupled with the Mediterranean migrant crisis, will thus drive Italy deeper into integration with and reliance on the European Union. An examination of the economic situation and future prospects for Italy, including the impact of the Mediterranean migrant crisis and the resources and capability the European Union offers through the CSDP, as well as assessing the current debate on fair burden sharing in the EU all lead to one conclusion: burden-sharing in the European Union will continue to grow out of economic necessity. Some EU members have resisted accepting that conclusion, as evidenced by the June 2016 Brexit vote in the United Kingdom.

A. ITALIAN ECONOMY AND PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

Prior to the onset of the Mediterranean migrant crisis, Italy was beset by major problems, including the sovereign debt crisis of the Eurozone, as well as anemic economic growth.¹⁴² Numerous bank defaults, the shuttering of thousands of businesses, and the lingering effects of the 2008 global recession had a biting effect on the Italian

¹⁴¹ Matteo Renzi, World Economic Forum, January 21, 2015, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/01/matteo-renzi-11-quotes-on-the-future-of-italy/>.

¹⁴² Oxfam. “The True Cost of Austerity and Inequality: Italy Case Study,” Oxfam International, September 2013, <https://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/cs-true-cost-austerity-inequality-italy-120913-en.pdf>.

economy, which has been stagnant for years.¹⁴³ Because Italy represents one of the largest economies in the EU, massive international loans or a bailout from the rest of the Eurozone would have put the EU in a precarious financial position by placing into question the viability of the greater economic union.¹⁴⁴ Italy was thus forced to enact austerity measures by both cutting government spending and raising revenue via taxation.¹⁴⁵

Many economists, primarily from the Keynesian school of economic thought, argued against austerity measures in a time of economic contraction. Paul Krugman argues that during the time that Americans know as the “Great Recession,” the European Union advocated policies of austerity in several of its member states that were heavily debt-laden, forcing faltering economies into greater suffering.¹⁴⁶ The European Commission’s directive of restraint or reduction in public spending in order to pay down national debt hit fragile economies, including Italy, particularly hard.¹⁴⁷ Italy raised taxes on household income to nearly 45%, increased its Value-Added Tax (VAT), resurrected taxes on homes, and reformed its pension system.¹⁴⁸ The tax measures further depressed consumption, while the pension reform left many on the cusp of retirement obliged to plan on retiring later in life.¹⁴⁹

Where has austerity left Italy economically? Despite its vast and harsh measures to raise revenue and cut its public spending, Italy has not been able to come up with annual budget surpluses. Since 2012, Italy has seen the share of debt vis-à-vis GDP increase every year, totaling approximately 130% of GDP in 2015.¹⁵⁰ While Italy has

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Oxfam, “Italy Case Study.”

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Paul Krugman, “The Case for Austerity Was a Lie. Why Does Britain Still Believe It? The Austerity Delusion,” *Guardian*, April 29, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/business/ng-interactive/2015/apr/29/the-austerity-delusion>.

¹⁴⁷ Matthew Dalton, “EU Tells Italy to Adopt More Austerity Measures,” *Wall Street Journal*, June 2, 2014, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/eu-tells-italy-to-adopt-more-austerity-measures-1401726690>.

¹⁴⁸ Oxfam, “Italy Case Study.”

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ “Fudging the Revolution,” *Economist*, February 20–26, 2016, 44.

reduced the annual budget deficit from over 10% of GDP in 2012 to a projected 2.4% of GDP for 2016, it still will miss the mark called for by the European Commission for countries with over 60% debt vis-à-vis GDP to plan for budget surpluses.¹⁵¹ Unbudgeted expenses for national crises, such as falling back into recession or the burgeoning Mediterranean migrant crisis, leave Italy to simply add to its budget deficits, both annually and overall.

Italy has yet to emerge from the sovereign debt crisis, but its economy has shown signs of higher growth since 2014, expanding by 1% in the last quarter of 2014.¹⁵² As the possibility of another global recession looms, Italy's most recent gains may be fleeting. In the last quarter of 2015, the Italian economy grew by only 0.1%, failing to meet the growth of 0.3% forecast by many economists.¹⁵³ Matteo Renzi argues that the austerity imposed by the European Commission is choking off additional economic progress in his country.¹⁵⁴ Though the recent sovereign debt crisis and resulting austerity measures impede Italian economic growth, Italy has not performed well economically since joining the Eurozone.¹⁵⁵

Structural problems abound in the Italian economy, and they are compounded by a demographic picture that is dour at best. First, productivity has remained stagnant in Italy since 1998, and many hypotheses exist to explain the lackluster productivity.¹⁵⁶ While hypotheses diverge to account for the stagnant productivity,¹⁵⁷ multiple sources

¹⁵¹ "Fudging the Revolution," *Economist*, February 20–26, 2016, 44.

¹⁵² Lorenzo Totaro, "Italian Economy Barely Expands, Casting Doubts on Outlook," Bloomberg Business, February 12, 2016, <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-02-12/italy-economy-barely-expands-casting-doubts-on-recovery-outlook>.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ "The Italian Job," *Economist*, January 30, 2016, <http://www.economist.com/news/finance-and-economics/21689630-reviving-italys-economy-will-require-sacrifices-not-just-italians-also>.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ "Italy: Selected Issues," International Monetary Fund, July 2015, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2015/cr15167.pdf>.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

indicate that Italy must enact structural reforms to its labor market regulations to spur productivity.¹⁵⁸

Second, the Italian economy is ravaged by organized crime. The World Bank estimates that the “shadow economy,” which includes the Italian crime underworld, accounts for upward of 15% of total Italian GDP, or nearly €225 billion in 2000–2006.¹⁵⁹ According to a similar estimate, the crime underworld accounted for 16–17.5% of Italian GDP in 2008.¹⁶⁰ Austerity would probably not be necessary in Italy if the government was able to collect taxes on the billions of Euros worth of illegal economic activities. The migrant crisis provides new opportunities for further illicit economic activity, and this is discussed in this chapter.

Finally, Italian economic woes are compounded by two major long-term challenges: a demographic deficiency and the questionable solvency of its banks. Italy’s population share of older citizens is increasing quickly, and Italian birth rates are among the lowest in the European Union.¹⁶¹ Budget deficits will likely widen in the future when pensioners have fewer younger workers to support their entitlements. Moreover, some of Italy’s banks are at risk of insolvency. Despite its role as the fourth-largest economy within the EU, Italy’s banks are debt-laden to the tune of €360 billion, which equates to 20% of the country’s GDP.¹⁶² Italian reserves to cover the cost of the burgeoning bad loans equates to approximately €160 billion, a mere 45% of the total bad debt.¹⁶³ Renzi finds himself again at odds with Brussels over the ability of individual EU member states to bail out banks.¹⁶⁴ Thus, the outlook for Italy is bleak without major reforms in a variety of sectors of the economy and society.

¹⁵⁸ “The Italian Job,” *Economist*.

¹⁵⁹ Giovanni Caggiano, “Italy: Economy,” Europa World Plus, <http://www.europaworld.com/entry/it.ec>.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶² “The Italian Job,” *Economist*, July 9, 2016, 9.

¹⁶³ “The Italian Job,” *Economist*, July 9, 2016, 9.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

B. THE MEDITERRANEAN MIGRANT CRISIS COSTS TO ITALY

One could argue that there is never a good time for a country to become saddled with a humanitarian crisis off of its shores, but Italy found itself in a particularly precarious and unenviable situation. In the face of the sovereign debt crisis, mounting annual budget deficits greater than European Union forecasts, and slow economic growth, Italy became ensnared in the throes of the largest migrant crisis since the end of World War II. Since 2012, tens of thousands of migrants have come ashore in Italy via maritime rescue. The economic toll of refugee support, through both naval rescue services and social welfare programs, has been large for the fiscally constrained Italian government.

The Italian naval operation *Mare Nostrum* constituted a massive expenditure for the Italian government. Because this was a crisis response operation undertaken by a government that has engaged in continual deficit spending, it is unlikely that the money for the operation came from a hidden surplus or rainy day fund. *Mare Nostrum* lasted for approximately one year (October 2013 to October 2014) and cost approximately €9 million per month, or €108 million for 12 months, due to the tremendous naval and air resources used on a nearly 24-hour basis.¹⁶⁵ To put this into perspective, the proposed operational budget of the Italian military in its entirety was €1.16 billion for 2015.¹⁶⁶ The European Union provided only €1.8 million toward Operation *Mare Nostrum*. Since Italy bore the costs of the operation nearly alone, the unsustainable financial burden was likely the cause for the operation's shutdown in 2014.¹⁶⁷

While the cost of rescuing migrants off of the Italian coast was substantial, the costs of social welfare aid to the rescued migrants have been much greater. Though some

¹⁶⁵ Adam Taylor, "Italy Ran an Operation that Saved Thousands of Migrants from Drowning in the Mediterranean. Why Did it Stop?" *Washington Post*, April 20, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/04/20/italy-ran-an-operation-that-save-thousands-of-migrants-from-drowning-in-the-mediterranean-why-did-it-stop/>.

¹⁶⁶ Tom Kington, "New Ships, Vehicles for Italy Amid Cuts," *Defense News*, January 13, 2015, <http://www.defensenews.com/story/defense/policy-budget/budget/2015/01/13/italy-budget-freccia-satellite-cosmo-skymed/21460287/>.

¹⁶⁷ "Frontex Joint Operation 'Triton'—Concerted Efforts to Manage Migration in the Central Mediterranean," Press Release Database, European Commission, October 7, 2014, http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-14-566_en.htm.

rescued migrants moved on to other countries in the European Union, mainly to Germany and Sweden, many have stayed in Italy to await a decision on their asylum status. As of October 2015, almost 100,000 migrants await results of their asylum application from the Italian government.¹⁶⁸ The Italian government doles out hefty sums of money to pay for migrant housing, education, healthcare, and food, and pays businesses and other organizations that house migrants approximately €35 per day per adult.¹⁶⁹ In 2015, these payments totaled €1.16 billion, which was nearly double the amount of money paid in 2014.¹⁷⁰ Further compounding the associated costs of migrant aid is the Italian government having to contend with mafia interference. Faced with a housing shortage to adequately shelter migrants, the Italian government has handed over an untold number of no-bid contracts to organizations with mafia ties.¹⁷¹ One man charged with corruption due to mafia association, Salvatore Buzzi, was recorded by investigators boasting that drug trafficking was less profitable than the migrant housing business.¹⁷²

A final Italian cost concerning the migrant crisis is through foreign policy. Italy has been attempting, within the larger European Union framework, to find a long-term solution that will slow the migrant crisis. One such solution was possibly negotiated with Turkey and came into effect in March 2016.¹⁷³ Italy's burden associated with the migrant crisis falls second only to that borne by Greece, as untold thousands have crossed overland through the Balkans or have made a short seaborne journey across the Aegean from Turkey to Greece. The European Union has sought help from Turkey to stem the flow of migrants through its lands, and was able to obtain Turkish assurances that it

¹⁶⁸ Steve Scherer, "Italy Relocates 70 Refugees as Cost to House Migrants Doubles," Reuters, October 21, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-italy-idUSKCN0SF28C20151021>.

¹⁶⁹ Stephanie Kirchgaessner, "'We Were Abandoned:' Migrants Tell of Suffering in Italy's Private Shelters," *Guardian*, November 26, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/nov/26/italy-migrant-shelters-refugees-naples-landlords>.

¹⁷⁰ Scherer, "Italy Relocates 70 Refugees."

¹⁷¹ Kirchgaessner, "'We Were Abandoned.'"

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ "Migrant Crisis: EU-Turkey Deal Comes Into Effect," BBC, March 20, 2016, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-35854413>.

would finally attempt to regulate the migratory flow.¹⁷⁴ Turkish political concessions were made in return for European Union economic measures; in a *quid pro quo* deal, the European Union will provide Turkey with a migratory fund to help it deal with the tide of refugees, to the tune of €3 billion.¹⁷⁵ In the initial years of disbursement, Italy will contribute roughly €225 million to the fund for Turkey,¹⁷⁶ in exchange for the Turkish commitment to both stem migrant arrivals to Europe and take back any migrants that do not obtain asylum in an EU member state.¹⁷⁷

While the European Union's migration fund for Turkey further adds to the Italian deficit and associated costs in dealing with the migrant crisis, Italy may see a bit of budgetary reprieve from the EU. European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker left the possibility open for leeway regarding deficit targets for countries dealing with the migrant crisis, provided such countries could prove the impact of migration had caused unbudgeted spending.¹⁷⁸ Matteo Renzi has long advocated such a policy, even initially withholding Italian support for an EU migratory fund for Turkey, in order to gain support for such a concession from the European Commission.¹⁷⁹ Despite this reprieve, it is unclear if Renzi has the ability to effect the necessary structural changes to the Italian economy to kick-start growth and productivity. In the face of the migrant crisis, Italy has sought and must continue to look for other avenues to contend with the enormous financial burden caused by the crisis.

¹⁷⁴ Francesca Piscioneri and Gabriela Baczynska, "Italy Drops Objections to EU Migration Fund to Turkey," Reuters, February 2, 2016, <http://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-europe-migrants-turkey-italy-idUKKCN0VA30K>.

¹⁷⁵ Piscioneri and Baczynska, "Italy Drops Objection to EU Migration Fund to Turkey."

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ "Migrant Crisis," BBC, March 20, 2016.

¹⁷⁸ Eszter Zalan, "Refugee Spending to be Exempt from EU Deficit Rules," *EU Observer*, October 27, 2015, <https://euobserver.com/economic/130855>.

¹⁷⁹ Piscioneri and Baczynska, "Italy Drops Objection to EU Migration Fund to Turkey."

C. ITALY'S WAY FORWARD: COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY

In the face of continuing economic difficulty and the mounting migrant crisis, Italy is looking to the European Union for aid in various forms. Italy will continue to seek relief in budget deficit targets due to the ongoing Mediterranean migrant crisis and will likely seek measures of economic aid as well. Without substantial economic reform and growth in Italy, the financial burden associated with the migrant crisis and its impact on the budget will be unsustainable. In this respect, there is a clear avenue available for relief to Italy, which is under the auspices of the European Union's Common Security and Defense Policy.

In the Treaty of Lisbon, the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) was established so that the European Union could achieve an operational capacity that utilized both civilian and military assets from member states.¹⁸⁰ The European Council votes to establish missions and member states will contribute to such missions according to their respective capabilities.¹⁸¹ Contributions can be made on an individual member state basis, or from a multinational force composed of member states that have entered into previous agreements with one another.¹⁸² To identify, support, and assess the operational needs of a mission established by the European Council, the Treaty of Lisbon tasked the European Defense Agency.¹⁸³

The top priority of the European Defense Agency (EDA) is the pooling and sharing of military assets, capabilities, and procurement across member states.¹⁸⁴ The EDA outlines this priority in a fairly direct manner by addressing the shortcomings in European Union defense capability:

¹⁸⁰ "Treaty of Lisbon," Eur-Lex: Access to European Union Law, European Union, December 17, 2007, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:12007L/TXT>.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ "Pooling and Sharing," European Defense Agency, European Union, <http://www.eda.europa.eu/what-we-do/eda-priorities/pooling-and-sharing>.

Recent operations have demonstrated critical gaps in European military capabilities. But while defense budgets are under pressure and investment is in decline, costs of major defense systems are rising. For European Member States cooperation in defense is the solution to acquire and maintain critical capabilities.¹⁸⁵

The EDA has thus identified one of the main problems in going forward with European defense: limited resources of member states in an ever-growing and increasingly complex security environment. Seizing on this fact, the EDA continues to push for increased capability-sharing, derived from the Ghent Initiative of 2010.¹⁸⁶

The Ghent Initiative is a German-Swedish “food for thought” proposal to increase “European defense cooperation.”¹⁸⁷ Through cooperation and burden-sharing, the aim of the initiative is to more efficiently spend resources within the European Union to both preserve and enhance individual member state military capabilities and possibly broaden the scope of capabilities among all member states that participate.¹⁸⁸ The approach of the Ghent Initiative entails three facets: to increase interoperability with the forces of a member state whose existence is predicated on a strictly national basis; to foster cooperation of member state forces but not promote crippling dependency; and to promote shared support structures for personnel training and education.¹⁸⁹ The intent of all approaches is to streamline resources that can be used more efficiently if pooled, rather than used on a national basis, while remaining keenly aware and respectful of the political sensitivities for each member state that may arise from greater integration and cooperation.¹⁹⁰

The path forward for cash-strapped European Union member states is fairly clear: in the absence of robust economic growth in many EU countries, the rise of diverse

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ “Pooling and Sharing,” European Defense Agency.

¹⁸⁷ “Pooling and Sharing, German-Swedish Initiative,” European Parliament, European Union, November 2010, http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/sede/dv/sede260511deseinitiative_/sede260511deseinitiative_en.pdf.

¹⁸⁸ “Pooling and Sharing,” European Parliament.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

security concerns, and the continuing humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean, greater pooling of resources and the sharing of the security burdens must take place. At a minimum, coordination between member states can stop or slow down defense cuts in capabilities that would leave the European Union as a whole bereft of vital military functions. The European Defense Agency seeks to accomplish this, as well as to spur the pooling and sharing of resources to keep overall defense spending in Europe from being duplicative and wasteful.¹⁹¹ The institutional framework for potential success for smart European defense spending and collectivization is thus available and only waits for the domestic political will of various EU member states to evolve.

D. ITALY AND THE CSDP

Realizing its current situation and future outlook, the Italian government has almost no other option than to become an advocate for greater burden-sharing and resource pooling in the European Union on defense matters. Though it has few other viable alternatives to ensure adequate continued military capability, Italy has embraced its role and has become one of the largest proponents for greater EU integration and burden sharing.

In a proposal from the Italian Ministry of Defense (MOD) in 2013 entitled “More Europe,” the Italian MOD makes a compelling case for greater burden sharing within the European Union.¹⁹² The Italian proposal is much more direct in its language than that of the Ghent Initiative. Advocating a stronger CSDP of greater efficiency, the Italian proposals cast the need for greater integration in dire, if not near-existential terms: “If the EU member states do not pool their efforts, where appropriate on certain common requirements or capabilities, none of them, nor Europe as a whole, will be able to guarantee its own security.”¹⁹³ The authors of the proposal were careful to not advocate efforts duplicative of NATO.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹¹ “Pooling and Sharing,” European Defense Agency.

¹⁹² “More Europe,” Italian Ministry of Defense, 2013, http://www.difesa.it/Primo_Piano/Documents/2013/More%20Europe%20final.pdf.

¹⁹³ “More Europe,” Italian Ministry of Defense.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

Acutely aware of the limiting factors posed by the country's mounting debt and resulting austerity measures, the Italian Defense Ministry asserts in its proposal that "stronger and closer cooperation among EU states is required for both budgetary reasons and strategic rationale."¹⁹⁵ In a curiously worded passage, Italy admits to being broke, but advocates greater EU burden sharing because no matter the economic problems of today or tomorrow, security "challenges and instability are already here."¹⁹⁶ The Italian proposal goes even further in its calls for integration than the Ghent Initiative, and the striking language was sure to draw the ire of states concerned with the loss of sovereignty on defense capabilities due to greater European Union defense integration:

The present phase of fiscal austerity, while affecting almost all MS's [member states] and compelling a widespread reduction in defense budgets, should stimulate a growing political impetus to go for a more incisive interaction and integration of our militaries to accept some degree of interdependency.¹⁹⁷

The Italian Defense Ministry's White Paper of 2015 echoed this sentiment by calling for the continued integration of European Union member states' defense forces, stating that integration was the "cornerstone... for the protection of security and national defense."¹⁹⁸

Despite Italy's insistence on greater European defense integration and burden-sharing, its efforts and pleas were met with the proverbial cold shoulder from the European Union when the Mediterranean migrant crisis began in earnest. As noted earlier, the Italian Naval Operation *Mare Nostrum* was a nearly Italian-only funded and operated crisis response mission. Despite pleas from Rome, the European Union was almost entirely unresponsive with the exception of a limited amount of funding.¹⁹⁹ The Italian government effectively forced the issue of greater burden sharing to the forefront

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ "White Paper for International Security and Defence," Italian Ministry of Defence, 2015, http://www.difesa.it/Primo_Piano/Documents/2015/07_Luglio/White%20book.pdf, 12.

¹⁹⁹ Sylvia Poggioli, "Italy Undertakes Long, Expensive Mission to Aid Migrants at Sea," NPR, August 24, 2014, <http://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2014/08/12/339881610/italy-undertakes-lonely-expensive-mission-to-aid-migrants-at-sea>.

when it shut down Operation *Mare Nostrum*. Italy was unable to continue funding the mission due to fiscal constraints, while the European Union was unwilling to authorize a robust successor mission due to its lack of political will. The crisis would continue to unfold in the face of a fairly meager and limited European response through FRONTEX Operation Triton.

The inflection point with European Union reticence concerning a response to the migrant crisis was reached in April 2015. After over 700 migrants perished in the Mediterranean, marking one of the largest tragedies to date in the crisis, the European Council sprang to action.²⁰⁰ European Union Naval Forces Mediterranean was created to provide naval rescue services, as well as to disrupt the business model of the human trafficking network that had thrived since the downfall of Ghadafi and failure of the Libyan state. The European Council finally provided Italy the framework and resources necessary that constituted a *European Union* response to the crisis, vice a solely Italian response. Though Italy leads the mission, over 24 EU member states have contributed thus far to Operation Sophia.²⁰¹ Major contributions of naval assets have come from Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, Slovenia, Spain, and the United Kingdom.²⁰² All of the aforementioned countries have contributed air assets to the mission, as have Greece and Luxembourg.²⁰³ Common costs for Operation Sophia are €1.82 million for the first year of the operation, while the countries involved shoulder the burden of cost for their respective units taking part in the mission.²⁰⁴ When the European Council voted to

²⁰⁰ “The Worst Yet?” *Economist*, April 19, 2015, <http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21648896-another-boat-capsizes-between-libya-and-italy-europe-debates-migration-policy-worst-drowning-yet>.

²⁰¹ EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia, European External Action Service, European Union, accessed March 12, 2016, http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/eunavfor-med/index_en.htm.

²⁰² “Deployed Units,” European External Action Service, European Union, accessed March 12, 2016, <http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/eunavfor-med/pdf/assets.pdf>.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ “European Union Naval Force- Mediterranean: Operation Sophia,” European External Action Service, European Union, February 12, 2016, http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/missions-and-operations/eunavfor-med/pdf/factsheet_eunavfor_med_en.pdf.

extend the mandate of Operation Sophia to late July 2017, it also authorized an additional €6.7 million to cover the common costs of the second year of the operation.²⁰⁵

The success or failure of Operation Sophia rests on many factors outside the control of the operation itself—above all, political resolutions in both the Syrian and Libyan conflicts. In the Libyan case, the EU operation would need either a UN Security Council Resolution of approval or an invitation from the fractured Libyan government to enter Libyan territorial waters to conduct operations against human traffickers at the source, both of which are unlikely in the foreseeable future. Despite these facts, the creation of Operation Sophia can be viewed as a success. In terms of burden-sharing, Operation Sophia represents a model for future missions to address a security concern that affects all of the European Union. Operation Sophia allows financially burdened member states to contribute to European Union security operations without shouldering a disproportionate burden. Italy will likely hail this cooperation as a model for future operations as it continues to argue for greater European integration on defense matters.

E. THE GREATER DEBATE OF EUROPEAN UNION BURDEN SHARING

Although Italy has its own unique challenges concerning the Mediterranean migrant crisis, the crisis has also thrust the issue of burden sharing upon the entirety of the European Union. While security issues and crisis response have played a large role in the discussion concerning the pooling of resources and sharing the burden of response collectively, economic and physical factors play a large role as well. The EU is faced both with the economic challenge of how to respond in financially aiding member states bearing the brunt of the burden, but also the challenge of migrant distribution among EU member states.

Through economic means, the European Union must aid member states that bear the bulk of the load of migrant influx due to their geographic location—namely Italy and Greece. Both countries have been in an economically precarious situation for years, and they serve as the gateway to Europe for the lion's share of the migrants who enter the EU.

²⁰⁵ “Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/993,” European Council, June 20, 2016, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016D0993&from=EN>.

Burden sharing in the strictly economic sense has risen as an issue of great importance for both Italy and Greece due to their domestic economic outlook. The European Union has made progress in this arena by contributing financial aid to frontline nations of the migrant crisis. In March 2016, the European Commission proposed a €700 million aid package to Greece to defray costs associated with migrant housing and aid.²⁰⁶ This measure is in addition to one passed in August 2015, which authorized €2.4 billion to be paid out to EU member states for costs associated with the migrant crisis, of which Italy and Greece together were entitled to over one billion Euros.²⁰⁷ The migrant crisis has thus shaped the debate of EU burden sharing in a strictly economic sense; the role of migrant distribution among EU member states is much more contentious.

In September 2015, the European Union passed a plan to relocate approximately 120,000 migrants from Italy and Greece across the remaining EU member states.²⁰⁸ While this was a good step forward in the debate about fair burden sharing, the plan's implementation has thus far been a failure. As of March 2016, fewer than 1,000 of the 120,000 migrants have been relocated within the broader EU, due in large part by the refusal of non-frontline EU member states to take in migrants.²⁰⁹ EU member states have thus “committed to burden sharing in principle but not in practice” concerning migrant relocation and distribution.²¹⁰ The EU appeared to be more enthralled with the possibility of making a deal with Turkey to accept the return of migrants than to face the reality of the need for actual burden sharing among EU member states when it comes to migrant

²⁰⁶ Valentina Pop, “European Commission Proposes EU Aid for Migrants Stuck in Greece,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 2, 2016, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/eu-executive-proposes-aid-for-refugees-stuck-in-greece-1456925472>.

²⁰⁷ “European Union Approves 2.4 Billion Euros Funding for Migration Crisis,” Reuters, August 10, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-funding-idUSKCN0QF15Z20150810>.

²⁰⁸ Krishnadev Calamur, “A Controversial Plan to Redistribute Migrants in Europe,” *Atlantic*, September 22, 2015, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/09/a-controversial-plan-to-redistribute-migrants-in-the-eu/406762/>.

²⁰⁹ “EU Urges Member States to Share Migrant Burden,” Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, March 13, 2016, <http://www.rferl.org/content/eu-urges-sharing-migrant-burden/27603297.html>.

²¹⁰ Angeliki Dimitriadi, “Burden Sharing, Where Art Thou?” European Council on Foreign Affairs, November 11, 2015, http://www.ecfr.eu/article/commentary_burden_sharing_where_art_thou5003.

hosting.²¹¹ Until rhetoric becomes reality and a plan of fair burden sharing of migrants can be implemented, the migrant crisis will continue to stoke the fires of the burden sharing debate.

Italy offers a valuable case study of a financially constrained frontline nation of the Mediterranean migrant crisis. With a bleak economic outlook, the mounting pressure of debt and imposed austerity, and the burgeoning migrant crisis, Italy's future is tied to a more integrated European Union in matters of defense and beyond. The framework presented by Germany and Sweden, and echoed by Italy, could both strengthen the European Union and reduce defense costs across member states, and the experience that Operation Sophia offers could serve as an example of success in resource pooling and defense burden sharing. The challenge posed by the migrant crisis will continue to make the need for burden sharing a major issue for the European Union. Greater burden sharing and integration hold the economic keys for both Italy and the European Union emerging stronger from the Mediterranean migrant crisis, while the current response of fractured muddling promises, at best, an unclear outcome.

²¹¹ "A Messy but Necessary Deal," *Economist*, March 12, 2016, <http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21694536-european-bargain-turkey-controversial-offers-best-hope-ending-migrant>.

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IV. THE POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THE MIGRANT CRISIS ON ITALY

“If this is Europe,” an angry Matteo Renzi thundered to fellow European Union member state leaders, “you can keep it!”²¹² Renzi, the prime minister of Italy, has shown such exasperation with the EU many times throughout the Mediterranean migrant crisis. The effects of the crisis are far-reaching across the European Union and are a cause of significant debate and concern among all member states. Italy serves as a frontline nation in the crisis and, second to Greece, takes the brunt of the impact from thousands of migrants arriving on European shores. Economic and security concerns weigh heavily for all involved parties, but nothing is as palpable as the political fallout wrought by the crisis.

Though the crisis’ full impacts will not be known for years to come, how has the Mediterranean migrant crisis affected the politics of Italy to date? The question poses two separate answers: domestically, the migrant crisis serves to buoy populist and Eurosceptic parties within Italy, while it may conversely serve to strengthen the Italian position in the international arena with the right approach. To adequately explore the aforementioned possibilities, one must briefly examine the national and political character of Italy, survey the domestic political developments concerning the migrant crisis, and evaluate the international political events surrounding the migrant crisis involving Italy. A thorough examination of all facets shows that developments from the migrant crisis put Italy in a precarious situation where it can either enjoy greater international prominence, or possibly see anti-migrant and anti-EU parties come to power.

A. ITALIAN NATIONAL CHARACTER AND POLITICAL CHARACTERISTICS

Many men of letters and social scientists have attempted to identify and brand the Italian national character. Alessandro Cavalli, in his work “Reflections on Political

²¹² Duncan Robinson and James Politi, “Anger Spills Over at Summit to Fix EU Migrant Policy,” *Financial Times*, June 26, 2015, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/4d2ef242-1c1a-11e5-a130-2e7db721f996.html#axzz43CcDScIE>.

Culture and the ‘Italian National Character,’” says that many of the attempts to tie values to the Italian national character are often misrepresentative of the society at large, or perpetuate unflattering stereotypes.²¹³ Cavalli goes on to outline his own attributes of the Italian national character and describes it as one that is undergirded by a deep distrust in national government and its associated institutions.²¹⁴ This penchant for distrust and skepticism in their own governmental institutions creates a legitimization deficit, in which (Cavalli says) the Italian public thinks that “everything that comes from above is bad” and perpetuates “the image of the governing class as incompetent and corrupt.”²¹⁵ This notion is deeply rooted in all facets of public life, thus causing and sustaining the legitimization deficit.

If most Italians view their government as bad, if not corrupt, then from where is legitimacy derived? Cavalli argues that greater Europe holds legitimacy in the eyes of most Italians.²¹⁶ Luigi Barzini echoes Cavalli’s assessment of what constitutes legitimacy in many Italians’ view, further arguing that European integration is seen as the malady for poor governance in Italy.²¹⁷ Barzini says that this view is so deep and widespread that “this is why Italian ministers in Brussels do not make waves, often accept decisions unfavorable to their country without complaining, and act as arbiters and pacifiers between contending parties.”²¹⁸ Despite the propensity of the Italians to search for legitimacy outside of their own borders, Cavalli argues that the Italian national character “hides the desire to draw closer and fear of moving away.”²¹⁹ This characteristic brings with it an envy of other European nations such as the France, Germany, and the United

²¹³ Alessandro Cavalli, “Reflections on Political Culture and the ‘Italian National Character,’” *Daedalus* 130, no. 3 (2001), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20027709>, 124.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 131.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 132.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 127.

²¹⁷ Luigi Barzini, *The Europeans* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983), 192.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 193.

²¹⁹ Cavalli, “Reflections on Political Culture,” 127.

Kingdom, leading to an Italian tendency to point out the supposed flaws of the aforementioned nations as they arise.²²⁰

Italian misgivings about government appear to be the only shared characteristic among its people. Political fragmentation constituted a formative experience for the Italian nation and has been perpetuated since its formation.²²¹ Its various models of government, including its latest republic, have been top-down imposed systems rather than benefitting from bottom-up sources of legitimacy.²²² Ernesto Galli della Loggia argued that the continuing political fragmentation of Italy leaves it with “a weak sense of identity as a nation.”²²³ In the face of mass migration from Albania during the Balkans Crisis of the mid 1990s, Galli della Loggia scathingly assessed that Italy was “incapable of addressing even the simplest issues of national solidarity, or of economic assistance to others.”²²⁴ This lack of solidarity gave rise to the Northern League, or *Lega Nord*, a northern-based Italian political party that masked xenophobic and separatist rhetoric in folksy and populist charm.²²⁵ Biocca argues that a corruption scandal of the political class in the 1990s further fueled *Lega Nord*’s popularity and the desire for further European integration.²²⁶

The *Lega Nord* was able to gain political power in Italy due to the low electoral threshold percentage for political parties. Italy’s electoral threshold is only 2% for parties to gain seats in its Chamber of Deputies.²²⁷ This setup leads to the existence of many political parties in Italy, which have tended to form coalitions with center-left and center-

²²⁰ Cavalli, “Reflections on Political Culture,” 127.

²²¹ Ibid., 125.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ Ernesto Galli della Loggia, *La Morte della Patria*, (Bari and Rome: Laterza, 1996) quoted in Dario Biocca, “Has the Nation Died? The Debate Over Italy’s Identity (and Future),” *Daedalus* 126, no.3 (1997), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20027449>, 231.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Dario Biocca, “Has the Nation Died? The Debate Over Italy’s Identity (and Future),” *Daedalus* 126, no.3 (1997), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20027449>, 226.

²²⁶ Ibid., 237.

²²⁷ Gianfranco Pasquino, “Italy: The Never-ending Transition to Democracy,” in *Comparative European Politics*, ed. Josep M. Colomer, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2008) 137.

right parties since the mid-1990s.²²⁸ The major parties include the left-wing Democratic Party, and the recently created anti-establishment Five Star Movement, which gained electoral prominence in 2013 by exploiting the anger at the center-right and left parties. With the addition of *Lega Nord*, the aforementioned parties constitute the main players in Italian politics, and the latter two parties will be examined in greater detail later.

While fragmentation, corruption, and internal discord mark Italy's domestic politics, how is Italy's foreign policy shaped? The point of departure for an examination of Italian foreign policy is the end of the Cold War. Filippo Andreatta makes a compelling argument for the Italian position, using an approach of both political science and geographic reality to construct the necessities of Italian foreign policy. Since the end of the Cold War and its bi-polar system, "multipolar systems produce segmented systems in which 'both peace and war' are likely to coexist in different places" simultaneously.²²⁹ This fact is not lost on the Italian government, since Italy is situated in precarious "geostrategic proximity" to the conflict hotspots of the Balkans, the Middle East, and North Africa.²³⁰ In this regard, Italy is presented with an almost unique security challenge compared to much of the rest of the European Union, as it must contend, like Greece, with the spillover effects caused by conflict to its eastern and southern borders.²³¹

Andreatta further argues that the aforementioned effects may not initially register on the radar of Italy's European or international allies, despite the fact that foreign conflicts' spillover effects can pose a risk of destabilizing Italy internally.²³² Security circumstances in the last 25 years have led to an Italian shift in foreign policy. As Andreatta aptly states, "Italy has made a break with postwar policies . . . Italy can no

²²⁸ Ibid., 141.

²²⁹ Pierre Hassner, "Beyond the Three Traditions: The Philosophy of War and Peace in Historical Perspective," *International Affairs* 70(1994): 4 quoted in Filippo Andreatta, "Italy at a Crossroads: The Foreign Policy of a Medium Power after the End of Bipolarity," *Daedalus* 130, no.2 (2001), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20027696>, 52.

²³⁰ Filippo Andreatta, "Italy at a Crossroads: The Foreign Policy of a Medium Power after the End of Bipolarity," *Daedalus* 130, no.2 (2001), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20027696>, 53.

²³¹ Andreatta, "Italy at a Crossroads," 54.

²³² Ibid.

longer afford to keep a low profile; the risk of facing a regional conflict without necessarily receiving automatic support from its allies has forced Rome out of its shell.”²³³ Mark Gilbert echoes Andreatta’s sentiment, arguing that Italy has pursued a much more active role in the Mediterranean region over the past decade.²³⁴ This newly active role, driven by its geographic location, places Italy in competition with France in the Mediterranean.²³⁵ Italy has increased its involvement in both international institutions and unilateral action to combat regional instability in the last ten years, hoping to boost its position in the international arena.²³⁶ Its national characteristic of envy toward France and Germany carries over into its foreign policy, as Italy’s role as a secondary power in the global arena vis-à-vis its more powerful European allies is a source of Italian consternation.²³⁷

B. ASSESSING THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL EFFECTS OF THE MIGRATION CRISIS ON ITALY

The Mediterranean migrant crisis that continues to unfold in and around Italy remains one of the largest unsolved problems for the country. Hundreds of thousands of migrants have reached Italy’s southern shores since 2013, and more are sure to follow in the years ahead due to the chaos in both Syria and Libya. The Italian government, faced with austerity measures imposed by the European Union due to its debt crisis, has been limited in its ability to adequately respond to the crisis. The political effects of the crisis continue to unfold, but several data points exist to assess possible trends. Through an examination of Italian public opinion, the rise of the populist and Eurosceptic Five-Star Movement, and the Italian regional election results that bolstered *Lega Nord*, the trend shows that the migrant crisis is having a definitive impact on politics in Italy; the trend does not bode well for Matteo Renzi and his incumbent Democratic Party.

²³³ Ibid., 55.

²³⁴ Mark Gilbert, “Italy: The Astuteness and Anxieties of a Second-Rank Power,” in *European Foreign Policies*, ed. Ronald Tiersky and John Van Oudenaren (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2010), 258.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Andreatta, “Italy at a Crossroads,” 55.

²³⁷ Gilbert, “Astuteness and Anxieties,” 258.

How do Italians feel about the migrant crisis? To answer this question, one must look to opinion polls. In May 2014, during the migration season in the Mediterranean when the Italian Navy was conducting Operation *Mare Nostrum*, the Pew Research Center endeavored to gauge Italian attitudes about migration. When Italians were asked if they preferred less, more, or the same amount of immigrants let into their country, a resounding 80% said they preferred less immigration.²³⁸ Italian ranked second only to Greece (87%) with this sentiment, and was followed by a distant third in France (57%).²³⁹ The spread between political ideologies in Italy was only 16%, with 77% of left wing Italians and 88% of right wing Italians sharing the same sentiment about immigration levels.²⁴⁰ Seventy-seven percent of Italians did not think that immigrants attempt to assimilate into Italian culture, while 69% of Italians felt that immigrants were an economic burden that either used too many welfare benefits or took native Italian jobs.²⁴¹ A spring 2015 Pew Research Center poll revealed that 61% of Italians had a negative view of Muslims in their country, an opinion made relevant by the fact that many migrants are Muslims.²⁴²

Migrants are not the only topic that registers negatively in Italian public opinion. As the country has been constrained both financially and militarily in its response to the migrant crisis, Italy looked to the European Union for aid to soften the impact of the crisis. Thus, far, the EU has been fairly tepid in its response and aid, primarily through the paltry sum it offered to fund Operation *Mare Nostrum*, its slow response to aid Italy militarily with the humanitarian and search and rescue operation in the Mediterranean, and the European Union's almost complete inability to relocate large numbers of migrants from Italy to other EU member states. In spring 2015, the Eurobarometer

²³⁸ Bruce Stokes, "A Fragile Rebound for EU Image on Eve of European Parliament Elections," Pew Research Center, May 12, 2014, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/05/12/chapter-3-most-support-limiting-immigration/>.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid.

²⁴² Bruce Stokes, "Faith in European Project Reviving," Pew Research Center, June 2, 2015, <http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2015/06/Pew-Research-Center-European-Union-Report-FINAL-June-2-20151.pdf>.

registered that over 35% of Italians felt that their country would fare better apart from the European Union, which made them second in this sentiment only to the United Kingdom.²⁴³ Italian confidence in the European Union has fallen from over 70% in 2008, to around 45% in 2015.²⁴⁴ One businessman from Parma, Roberto Leoni, described Italian sentiment by saying that “our skepticism isn’t against Europe, it’s about how things have gone. We should not pursue an exit but we just don’t feel safeguarded by Europe and we need to be appreciated a bit more.”²⁴⁵

C. POPULISM AND EUROSCEPTICISM OF THE FIVE STAR MOVEMENT

As Euroscepticism grows in Italy, due in part to both European Union-imposed austerity and the incoherent EU response to the migrant crisis, opposition parties are attempting to wield these issues as a political sword against Renzi’s incumbent government. The Five Star Movement (FSM) is one such organization that engages in anti-immigrant rhetoric. Its leader, Beppe Grillo, railed against the Italian government in 2013 in a discussion of reforming a law that made irregular immigration illegal.²⁴⁶ Essentially blasting the move by the parliament as an open-door policy, Grillo blogged, “this amendment is an invitation to migrants from Africa and the Middle East to head for Italy . . . how many immigrants can we accommodate if one Italian in eight does not have money?”²⁴⁷ This statement is fairly mild compared to other blog posts by Grillo, which include a comparison of migrants to rats, and a photo posted of the Interior Minister “blackened up” as Grillo proceeded to lambast the immigration policies of the government.²⁴⁸

²⁴³ James Politi, “How Italy Fell Out of Love with the EU,” *Financial Times*, March 16, 2016, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/3d11a974-eab2-11e5-bb79-2303682345c8.html#axzz43CcDScIE>.

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Politi, “How Italy Fell Out of Love.”

²⁴⁶ Naomi O’Leary, “Immigration Dispute Shows Fault Lines in Italy’s 5-Star,” Reuters, October 11, 2013, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-italy-grillo-idUSBRE99A0EK20131011>.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ “Italy: Beppe Grillo Under Fire for Migrant Tweet,” BBC, June 18, 2015, <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-news-from-elsewhere-33167343>.

Grillo and his Five Star Movement engage in what Paolo Franzosi, Francesco Marone, and Eugenio Salvati term “strategic Euroscepticism.”²⁴⁹ They posit that FSM’s rhetoric is

Built on strategic-tactical positioning in party competition, such as “the politics of the opposition,” based on a government-opposite dynamic, and the incentives and constraints offered by domestic political institutions and rules. At present, the “strategic” explanation seems to be more useful to understand FSM’s Euroscepticism.²⁵⁰

The FSM is thus taking advantage of the shifts in Italian public opinion regarding the European Union and adopting a position that it hopes will bring it political gain. This strategic skepticism, or political opportunism, began in the months prior to the Italian general election of 2013 and has recurred in various instances since.²⁵¹ Despite the FSM’s Euroscepticism not having “a specific and sound ideological base,”²⁵² it went on to garner more votes than any other political party (25.52%) in the Italian general election of 2013.²⁵³

D. LEGA NORD: FROM FRINGE PARTY TO POLITICAL CONTENDER

An Italian political party that does not lack an ideological base in anti-immigrant policy and Euroscepticism is the *Lega Nord* (LN). Formed in the early 1990s as a party that advocated northern secession from the remainder of Italy, the LN has had some semblance of representation in the Italian parliament for the better part of the last quarter century.²⁵⁴ Whereas the FSM seems to exploit the anxieties caused by the migration crisis as a matter of political opportunism, the LN would likely not enjoy the prominence

²⁴⁹ Paolo Franzosi, Francesco Marone, and Eugenio Salvati, “Populism and Euroscepticism in the Italian Five Star Movement,” *International Spectator* 50, no. 2 (2015), DOI:10.1080/03932729.2015.1030273, 113.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., 114.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 113.

²⁵² Franzosi, Marone, and Salvati, “Populism and Euroscepticism,” 122.

²⁵³ Gianfranco Pasquino and Marco Valbruzzi, “The Impact of the 2013 General Election on the Italian Political System: the End of Bipolarism?” *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 20, no. 4(2015), DOI: 10.1080/1354571X.2015.1066111, 445.

²⁵⁴ Manuela Caiani and Nicolo Conti, “In the Name of the People: The Euroscepticism of the Italian Radical Right,” *Perspectives on European Politics and Society* 15, no. 2(2014), DOI: 10.1080/15705854.2014.885766, 185.

it has today without the migrant crisis, as it has been espousing xenophobic rhetoric for years.²⁵⁵ Manuela Caiani and Nicolo Conti posit that the LN has used its relative power in government, as a coalition partner of Silvio Berlusconi's *Forza Italia*, to make Italian immigration laws more stringent.²⁵⁶ Party documents and public rhetoric since the LN's founding interweave a fear of Italian cultural loss through both European integration and the "flood of immigrants."²⁵⁷ The party is particularly hostile to Muslim migrants and peppers its rhetoric with Crusades-era language, as it warns against the "invasion of immigrants" of Islam.²⁵⁸

The *Lega Nord*'s unapologetically xenophobic and nationalist rhetoric has always gained attention, but now it is seeing a resurgence in political support. The LN's leader, Matteo Salvini, has seen his approval ratings rise slowly since taking the helm at the LN in 2013.²⁵⁹ Salvini has worked to transform the LN from a regional party to one with national political aspirations, and he has also benefitted from the relative disintegration of Berlusconi's last center-right coalition.²⁶⁰ In late 2013, Salvini's re-tooled LN was able to eclipse Berlusconi's *Forza Italia* in regional elections in Emilia-Romagna.²⁶¹ In the 2015 Italian regional elections, the *Lega Nord* topped its previous electoral gains and was able to make electoral inroads to regions once considered bastions of left-wing support, capturing the plurality of the vote in Matteo Renzi's home region of Tuscany.²⁶² Polling in January 2016 indicates that the LN has the support of 16–17% of the Italian public.²⁶³

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 193.

²⁵⁷ Ibid., 192.

²⁵⁸ Ibid.

²⁵⁹ Rachel Sanderson and James Politi, "Italy's New Political Star: Northern League Leader Matteo Salvini," *Financial Times*, December 2, 2014, <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/6221b64a-79f8-11e4-9b34-00144feabdc0.html#axzz43CcDScIE>.

²⁶⁰ Stephen Kirchgaessner, "Rightwing Northern League Makes Gains in Italian Elections," *Guardian*, June 1, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/01/northern-league-gains-italian-elections-matteo-salvini>.

²⁶¹ Sanderson and Politi, "Italy's New Political Star."

²⁶² Ibid.

²⁶³ Giulia Paravicini, "Italy's Far Right Jolts Back from Dead," *Politico*, February 3, 2016, <http://www.politico.eu/article/italys-other-matteo-salvini-northern-league-politicians-media-effettosalvini/>.

Though the LN falls well below the support enjoyed by Renzi's Democratic Party and the FSM, if new elections were held, Salvini could possibly oust Renzi with a coalition of right-wing parties.²⁶⁴ The *Lega Nord* has thus gone from being in 2013 a regional, fringe right-wing party nearly requiring life support, to becoming a party that could pose a significant contention for power. With its rhetoric against migrants based in ideology, as well as its railings against the European Union, the *Lega Nord* has risen due in large part to the fear and anxiety situated around the Mediterranean migrant crisis.

The rise of the Five Star Movement and the resurgence of the *Lega Nord* have mostly come from the anxieties and dismay over the European Union's ineffectual response to the migrant crisis. The EU's response to the migration crisis has been incoherent at best. Because the Italians have long placed faith in the legitimacy of EU institutions, since they suffer from their own legitimization problems with Italian institutions, the European Union had a chance to promote deeper integration and display the benefits of EU membership when the crisis arose. The inadequate EU response to the migration crisis, coupled with ongoing EU-imposed austerity, has made many Italians simply lose faith in the European Union. This loss of trust has opened the door for political parties that are both Eurosceptic and harshly anti-immigrant, as the two positions nearly go hand-in-hand. What effect has the rise of these two parties, buoyed by Euroscepticism and anti-immigrant fervor, had on the incumbent government of Matteo Renzi?

E. DOMESTIC POLITICAL REALITY ALTERS ITALIAN FOREIGN POLICY

When Matteo Renzi came to power in 2014, Italy was in the throes of the migrant crisis. It had just launched Operation *Mare Nostrum* a few months prior and was continuing to see thousands of migrants come ashore in its southern regions. Renzi and Italy were essentially dealing with the crisis alone: *Mare Nostrum* was a nearly Italian-only funded operation, as the EU contributed financial aid that accounted for only 2% of the operation's cost. A political solution to the crisis was nowhere in sight and continues

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

to remain elusive as of September 2016. Renzi was thus confronted with a political conundrum, as Italy could not bear the burden of the migrant crisis alone in the era of austerity. Faced with limited resources and a humanitarian crisis that had no end in sight, Renzi set out to make the case for European Union assistance to Italy.

Operation *Mare Nostrum* was launched before Renzi took the reins of power in Italy. Hundreds of migrants were dying at sea, sometimes on a daily basis, and Italy had to act with or without European Union involvement or aid. Renzi and his cabinet shut down *Mare Nostrum* when it reached its twelve-month mark. They had been arguing for months that the Mediterranean migrant crisis was a European problem, vice a solely Italian issue.²⁶⁵ This action effectively thrust the issue of European solidarity to the forefront. If the EU was not going to help Italy contend with the crisis in a major way, was it going to sit back and watch thousands of migrants perish at sea? Since FRONTEX Operation Triton's assets paled in comparison to those of *Mare Nostrum*, the EU faced a mounting death toll of migrants in the Mediterranean in the spring of 2015. The European Council convened and established European Union Naval Force Mediterranean, and installed Italy as the lead country in what would later be called Operation Sophia. The goal of a European Union response to the humanitarian aspect of the crisis was finally realized by Renzi, though it had taken high loss of human life to attain.

The shifting of Italian public opinion caused by the slow and meandering response of the European Union to the migrant crisis marks a much more boisterous and assertive Italian tone in foreign policy. In June 2015, after the creation of EUNAVFOR Med, Renzi continued his criticism of the EU's slow response, especially when it came to migrant relocation outside of Italy. When a proposal was floated by the European Commission to transfer a paltry sum of 24,000 migrants from Italy, Renzi reacted by saying that such a low sum was "almost a provocation."²⁶⁶ He went on to say that, "if Europe chooses solidarity, good. If it doesn't, we have Plan B ready. But it would first

²⁶⁵ Steve Scherer, "Italy's Renzi Says EU Must Take Responsibility for Boat Migrants," Reuters, June 6, 2014, <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refdaily?pass=52fc6fbd5&id=53aa5f488>.

²⁶⁶ Agence France-Presse, "We Will Hurt EU if Migrant Crisis Is Not Fixed, Says Italian PM Matteo Renzi," *Guardian*, June 14, 2015, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/15/we-will-hurt-eu-if-migrant-crisis-is-not-fixed-says-italian-pm-matteo-renzi>.

and foremost hurt Europe.”²⁶⁷ Renzi did not proceed to describe what such plans would entail. When pressed on the subject, Renzi’s Interior Minister, Angelino Alfano, simply said that, “if Europe is not supportive, it will find itself dealing with a different Italy. We will not accept a selfish Europe.”²⁶⁸ Italy’s more assertive tone has been noticed in Brussels. European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker stated in January 2016 that “the atmosphere between Italy and the rest of the EU is not at its best at the moment. By the end of February, I will be going to Italy because I have to tackle the issue myself.”²⁶⁹ Specifically addressing his professional relationship with Renzi, Juncker simply said, “I keep my rancor [with Renzi] in my pocket.”²⁷⁰ It would seem that Renzi has unleashed a tidal wave of Italian frustration on Brussels, which is a far cry from Barzini’s assertion that Italian ministers avoid making waves.

Renzi’s rhetoric, which has at times festered with vitriol toward the EU and Germany, is not merely empty blustering to express growing Italian popular unease with the European Union. Renzi is using his position to wield influence within the EU in order to bring some fiscal relief to his country. A once promising alliance with German Chancellor Angela Merkel has faced some rough patches over the last year, as Renzi has sought concessions from the EU to benefit his domestic agenda.²⁷¹ Remarking on the latest EU attempts to broker a deal with Turkey regarding the migrant crisis, Renzi stated that, “if one wants a pan-European strategy to resolve the refugee crisis, then it’s not enough for Angela to call Hollande and Juncker and for me to read about it in the press.”²⁷² These words were translated into action when Italy put a freeze on over €200

²⁶⁷ Ibid.

²⁶⁸ France-Presse, “We Will Hurt EU.”

²⁶⁹ Jacopo Barigazzi, “Juncker to Renzi: Brussels Isn’t Berlin’s Puppet,” *Politico*, January 15, 2016, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/15/we-will-hurt-eu-if-migrant-crisis-is-not-fixed-says-italian-pm-matteo-renzi>.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Kalypso Nicolaidis, “Merkel and Renzi Are the Partners Who Can Reshape Europe,” *Financial Times*, July 3, 2014, <https://next.ft.com/content/8ff7f1a8-01ec-11e4-ab5b-00144feab7de>.

²⁷² Florian Eder, Jacopo Barigazzi, and Matthew Karnitschnig, “Renzi Makes Merkel an Offer She Can’t Refuse,” *Politico*, January 29, 2016, <https://next.ft.com/content/8ff7f1a8-01ec-11e4-ab5b-00144feab7de>.

million of Italian aid meant for Turkey to stem the flow of migrants to Greece.²⁷³ Since Renzi is not the only European leader that must contend with uneasy public opinion at home, he leveraged his position against German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who also needs a resolution of the migrant crisis due to waning poll numbers.²⁷⁴ Italy's newfound and feisty voice within the European Union has achieved some important concessions favorable to Rome.

Italy is at an important point in its post-Cold War political development. Faced with an unforeseeable end to one of the largest humanitarian crises since the end of the Second World War, Italy's hope in the European Union is faltering. Anti-immigrant and Eurosceptic forces are growing within the country, due in large part to the lack of significant aid from the once-vaunted European Union to help Italy absorb the shock of many migrants' arrival. Recognizing this turn of events, Prime Minister Matteo Renzi embarked on a mission to garner EU concessions for aid to his country. Such an endeavor was one of both political and financial necessity, for Italy cannot continue to wade through the crisis alone, and Renzi would not be likely to last if that remained the case. After recently mending ties with Germany and garnering support for a loosening of EU financial constraints on Italy, Renzi alluded to Germany and Italy sharing a common enemy in the form of populism.²⁷⁵ Time will tell if Renzi's newfound and pugnacious tone will quell the rising tide of populism in his country, and if the concessions he has sought are enough to reverse the growing unease of the Italian people with their role in the European Union. Tone alone will not keep Renzi in power, and continued unfettered immigration into Italy will only boast his political rivals, particularly the *Lega Norde*. Real results with tangible outcomes are the factors that hold the most promise for Renzi to hold power and effectively counter the growing anti-immigrant fervor of the Italian public.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Matthew Karnitschnig, "Merkel and Renzi Bury the Hatchet," Politico, January 29, 2016, <http://www.politico.eu/article/angela-merkel-and-matteo-renzi-bury-the-hatchet-migration-refugees-budget/>.

²⁷⁵ Paul Carrell, "Renzi, Soothing Ties with Merkel, Says Populism Is Common Enemy," Reuters, January 29, 2016, <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-germany-italy-idUSKCN0V71Q1>.

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V. ITALIAN MIGRATION POLICY AND THE PROSPECTS OF REFUGEE ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

The Mediterranean Sea, which evokes images of sunny vacations and a temperate climate, serves as a nautical graveyard for thousands of desperate people. During the last week of May and the beginning of June 2016, as the weather in the Mediterranean gave way to summer, the death toll from crossing attempts from North Africa to Italy was 1,000.²⁷⁶ This doubled the total for 2016 to over 2,000 lives lost in attempts to cross the Mediterranean Sea.²⁷⁷ With the so-called boating season reaching its peak, thousands of people are fleeing the shores of Northern Africa for Europe across the Mediterranean in search of better living and economic conditions. The closest European nation north of Libya with the means to receive migrants is Italy; its geographic proximity to conflict-riddled states makes it one of the primary destinations for the desperate. In the months after the EU-Turkey refugee deal in March 2016, Italy surpassed Greece in the total number of refugee arrivals.²⁷⁸ The crisis began after the Arab Spring (with the aid of NATO) swept away Muammar Ghaddafi and his regime in Libya in October 2011. Libya became a failed state with a divided and ineffectual government. Libya also became a springboard for the pent-up demand caused by war, economic deprivation, and state oppression across Africa and the Middle East. The migrant crisis since 2013 continues nearly unabated, and no plausible political or military solution is in sight.

Despite the gloomy prospects of continued conflict and poor conditions in the vicinity of the Mediterranean Sea, the crisis possesses a silver lining for Italy. Economic and demographic stagnancy took root in Italy in the last few years of the 20th century, but the current situation has the potential to alleviate many of Italy's long-term problems.

²⁷⁶ Adam Taylor, "Why the Number of Refugees Drowning in the Mediterranean Keep Rising," *Washington Post*, June 3, 2016, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/06/03/why-the-number-of-refugees-drowning-in-the-mediterranean-keeps-rising/>.

²⁷⁷ "International Organization for Migration," International Organization for Migration, Last modified June 13, 2016, <http://www.iom.int/>.

²⁷⁸ Laurence Norman and Valentina Pop, "EU to Help Libya Fight Smugglers with Naval Mission," *Wall Street Journal*, May 23, 2016, <http://www.wsj.com/articles/eu-to-help-libya-fight-smugglers-with-naval-mission-1464020730>.

A coherent response backed by a sound economic integration policy possesses the ability to turn the migrant crisis into an opportunity for Italy, through both boosting the economy and solving the demographic problem for the Italian state. An examination of refugee economic integration, Italy's asylum and refugee aid policy, the European Union's policy, and the various positive impacts refugees can have on host countries will show that Italy has a golden opportunity to restructure and revitalize its country through the opportunity presented by the current Mediterranean crisis.

References to both a migrant and refugee crisis describe the situation in the Mediterranean. Refugees are people “displaced by persecution, war, or conflict, who have fled across an international border and are in need of humanitarian assistance” according to Karen Jacobsen.²⁷⁹ According to the UN, a migrant is someone who goes to another country, usually to find work and improve his or her economic conditions.²⁸⁰ Both terms correctly describe the current crisis affecting Italy. The bulk of this work will address the refugee aspects of the crisis, but it will also discuss economic migrants.

A. THE PROSPECT OF REFUGEES AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION

Before assessing the prospects of economic integration for refugees within Italy, one must first address the feasibility of successful refugee integration on a macro level. Can refugees have a positive effect on host communities or do they constitute a drain on host nation resources? The answer to this question lies primarily in the way that states handle refugee influxes, but promising examples demonstrate that refugees can be constructively integrated into host community economies and show a willingness and ability to work, even in the direst of circumstances. An examination of refugee camps in Somalia and Uganda, along with an analysis of integrative state policies, will show that hosting refugees can have a positive effect on a host nation's economy.

In examining the economic activity of refugees in Somalia in the 1980s, Gaim Kibreab confronted the notion of “refugee dependency syndrome,” a belief that was

²⁷⁹ Karen Jacobsen, *The Economic Life of Refugees* (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2005): 5.

²⁸⁰ “UNHCR Viewpoint: ‘Refugee’ or ‘Migrant’—Which Is Right?” United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, July 11, 2016, <http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/latest/2016/7/55df0e556/unhcr-viewpoint-refugee-migrant-right.html>.

present in both the Somali host government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).²⁸¹ This syndrome is characterized by a lack of motivation and general lethargy among the refugee population, which stems from a dependence on aid handouts from the host government, other governments, or international organizations.²⁸² The dependency syndrome was a widely held belief in Somalia, but Kibreab notes that despite the deeply entrenched idea, refugees in Somalia “were not only willing to work; they worked, often for infinitesimal returns, whenever opportunities existed.”²⁸³ Kibreab argues that, while many refugees could not achieve self-sufficiency through their work due to the small profits and thus continued to receive aid, the refugees in the aggregate were anything but lazy or lethargic.

Kibreab found that refugees are often not content with just having their basic needs met, but seek goods and services that satisfy a materialistic craving.²⁸⁴ In order to procure more goods and despite the small returns, 75% of refugees engaged in some type of income-generating activity, whether it be farming, trade, or labor.²⁸⁵ Kibreab further notes that refugee settlements near Somali communities helped breathe life into once stagnant villages; economic activity increased due to the newfound market, in which refugees played a large role in new commercial ventures.²⁸⁶ Refugees in Somalia also showed a propensity to grow their own food when the local land would support such ventures. As temporary circumstances gave way to long-term displacement, refugees showed a strong desire to engage in agricultural activity so their food would be fresh and of desirable nutritional value, since that given by aid agencies was questionable in both regards.²⁸⁷ Kibreab concludes that the most successful refugee settlements were those where NGOs fostered an environment of assistance based on business principles and skill

²⁸¹ Gaim Kibreab, “The Myth of Dependency Among Camp Refugees in Somalia 1979–1989,” *Journal of Refugee Studies* 6, no. 4 (1993): 330.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, 330–331.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 332.

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 340.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 343.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 340.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 344.

development, leading to the overall observation that if refugees are given the tools and placed in environments conducive to economic and agricultural activities, they will seek self-sufficiency.²⁸⁸

Research conducted nearly two decades after Kibreab's study by the University of Oxford's Humanitarian Innovation Project (HIP) of refugees in Uganda led to similar findings. Uganda hosts several hundred thousand refugees, of which Congolese and Somali refugees comprise the majority.²⁸⁹ HIP's research dispels several myths about refugee economics and ultimately concludes that refugees can have a positive and lasting effect on the economies of host nations.

The first myth that HIP's research dispels is that of economic isolation among refugee settlements. Across several regions and cities with refugee settlements close by, HIP "encountered many clear indicators of economic interdependence between refugees operating" in markets and regional trading centers.²⁹⁰ This is even in spite of the geographic isolation of the refugee settlements in Nakivale and Kyangwali, Uganda, as well as the poor infrastructure for mobility.²⁹¹ Ugandan nationals, with government permission, travel to the aforementioned refugee settlements due to the high quality of maize grown by the refugees. Ugandan nationals purchase the maize for personal consumption or act as middlemen for further distribution.²⁹² Somali refugees present in the same settlements will often lease their plots of land to other refugees in return for profits, which are then invested in shops for various trading goods.²⁹³

A second myth that HIP dispels about refugees through its research is the notion that refugees are necessarily a burden on host communities. Survey results on the origin of refugee- purchased goods showed that of rural-settled refugees, 68% purchased goods

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 347.

²⁸⁹ Alexander Betts et al., "Refugee Economies: Rethinking Popular Assumption," University of Oxford, Refugee Studies Centre, June 2014, <https://www.rsc.ox.ac.uk/files/publications/other/refugee-economies-2014.pdf>: 7.

²⁹⁰ Alexander Betts, "Refugee Economies," 11.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 11

²⁹² Ibid., 13.

²⁹³ Ibid., 14.

from Ugandan nationals, while urban-settled refugees purchased goods from Ugandan nationals at a rate of 97%—all on a daily basis.²⁹⁴ Survey results also revealed that among refugee entrepreneurs, 14% (rural-settled) to 40% (urban-settled) of their employees are Ugandan nationals.²⁹⁵ Refugees also worked for Ugandan employers.²⁹⁶

A third myth dispelled by HIP is that of refugee dependency. Expanding on Kibreab's work, HIP's research revealed a marked disparity between aid given to refugees, based primarily on locality. A whopping 83% of survey respondents received some assistance from international organizations if they were settled in rural areas, while 78% of refugees settled in urban environments received no aid from international organizations.²⁹⁷ Despite the differences in fortune between the two groups, only 1% of rural-settled refugees live on international aid assistance alone, while the majority use it to supplement their income.²⁹⁸ Due to a dearth of micro-loans and a general non-availability of start-up capital, many refugees find rather creative ways to procure the capital necessary for starting their own businesses. Personal savings, community lending organizations, inter-refugee pooling and loans, and social insurance programs are a few of the options that refugees in Uganda resort to in order to finance new businesses or to aid the particularly vulnerable members of society.²⁹⁹ Despite the limited availability of funds or resources, long-term Ugandan refugees continue to seek a degree of self-reliance despite the obstacles present.

After a review of these two specific examples of examining refugees in an economic context, it is necessary to examine refugee trends of settlement and economics at the macro level. Karen Jacobsen argues that the majority of refugees will “remain in their country of first asylum for years as the civil strife and insecurity in their home

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 16.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 19.

²⁹⁶ Ibid.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., 36.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 37.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 37–38.

countries plays out.”³⁰⁰ In such “protracted situations,” refugees will either self-settle among the host nation populace, or will be formally settled by the host nation government if it has the capacity.³⁰¹ Jacobsen opines that the manner in which a refugee settles will determine the economic integration (or lack thereof) that a specific refugee experiences.³⁰² The United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention lays out the economic rights of refugees within a host country, but since state sovereignty trumps such commitments, many signatory nations do not entirely implement the economic provisions concerning the rights of refugees.³⁰³ Jacobsen states that, despite the protection provided by the Convention,

It is increasingly common for host governments to restrict all kinds of economic activities by refugees outside designated camp areas, in an effort to discourage permanence and encourage repatriation. If legislation does not exist, host governments usually issue regulations concerning where refugees should live, and their freedom to move around, seek work, and access social services. In recent years, an increasingly restrictive climate has prevailed in many key host countries.³⁰⁴

Host government policy thus plays the largest role in shaping the context for the economic activities in which refugees engage. Such activity exists in two realms: the legal and the illicit.³⁰⁵ The legal domain is the area that refugees engage in under government purview and thus is activity approved by the host nation and is often enabled and aided by NGOs. The second domain is illicit activity, occurring within the shadow economy of a state. This can encompass all sorts of illegal activity, from simple agricultural plots in unauthorized areas of the host nation, to prostitution and human trafficking.³⁰⁶ As a host nation becomes more restrictive of the economic ventures that

³⁰⁰ Karen Jacobsen, *The Economic Life of Refugees* (Bloomfield: Kumarian Press, 2005): 2.

³⁰¹ Jacobsen, *Economic Life of Refugees*, 2.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, 7.

³⁰³ Jacobsen, *Economic Life of Refugees*, 14.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

³⁰⁵ Karen Jacobsen, “Livelihoods in Conflict: The Pursuit of Livelihoods by Refugees and the Impact on the Human Security of Host Communities,” *International Migration* 40, no. 4 (2002), doi: 10.1111/1468-2435.00213.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

refugees can pursue, one is likely to see a rise in illegal activity by the refugees. Favorable host nation policy is often the best and last hope for people who are usually without assets and that also lack the ability to easily procure cash or credit.³⁰⁷

Perhaps the largest and oftentimes most unknown factor concerning economic integration and refugees is the nature of their presence in a host country. Will a crisis that produces an influx of refugees become a long-term challenge, or a short-term flare up of circumstance? The answer to this question is fairly straightforward: once refugees enter a country, they are likely to stay for a long time, if not permanently. The reasons for protracted stays are threefold: under the protection of the *non-refoulement* principle in international law, host nations are not to return refugees to their homeland, owing to the danger of persecution.³⁰⁸ The second reason is that the repatriation of refugees after it is safe to re-enter a former conflict region is to occur on a voluntary basis.³⁰⁹ Host nations may find policy “workarounds” to spur repatriation through visa controls and other avenues, but as signatories of the 1951 Refugee Convention, are not supposed to force outright the repatriation of the refugees they may be hosting.³¹⁰ The last consideration reflects the fact that refugees may simply not want to return to their country of origin for a number of reasons, including bleak economic prospects upon return. Refugees may regard their lives in a host country as holding more promise than repatriation,³¹¹ a notion recently documented by the *Financial Times*. Immediately after that failed Turkish putsch of July 2016, a number of Syrian refugees were on record decrying the coup, as the possibility of regime change could entail deportation to Syria.³¹²

While a conflict that produces an influx of refugees may appear to be short-lived in nature, refugees are more likely to stay in a host nation than return home. State policymakers must acknowledge the near-permanence of a refugee presence and should

³⁰⁷ Jacobsen, *Economic Life of Refugees*, 12.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 9.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹¹ *Ibid.*

³¹² Erika Solomon, “Erdogan Finds Ardent Allies Among Syria Refugees,” *Financial Times*, July 21, 2016, <http://www.ft.com>.

thus address the need for long-term solutions in response to a refugee influx. Once the initial furor caused by a refugee influx abates, refugees will remain in a country. This likely persistent presence raises the question for a government: what should “we” do? Since refugees show the ability to positively affect a host nation’s economy, it is not difficult to conceive of a scenario in which a state implements a long-term solution that is beneficial to itself and the refugees alike.

B. ITALY’S ASYLUM POLICY

With the EU-Turkey refugee deal in place in March 2016, Italy surpassed Greece in seaborne arrivals of people from the Mediterranean. Unlike Greece, Italy must cope with arrivals from not only the Middle East, but from Africa as well. In order to determine the efficacy of Italy’s asylum policy, it is first necessary to conduct a policy overview. Italy’s policy concerning asylee benefits warrants further examination to assess the prospects of economic integration. Finally, Italian policy on refugees does not exist solely in the context of domestic policy, as it must interface with the European Union, specifically concerning the Dublin Regulation and proposed EU refugee relocation programs. The interplay of domestic and international policy creates a precarious situation for Italy as a host nation to refugees and helps to further muddy the waters when it comes to finding an effective long term solution for the current crisis.

In 2015, over 150,000 migrants reached the shores of Italy.³¹³ During the first nine months of 2015, Italy processed nearly 60,000 asylum or temporary protection applications, of which the Italian government rejected over 24,000.³¹⁴ Another 50,000 applications were in the queue for state review by the end of September 2015.³¹⁵ The countries of origin for asylum applications in Italy are, in descending order, Nigeria, Gambia, Pakistan, Senegal, Bangladesh, Mali, Afghanistan, Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire,

³¹³ Maria de Donato, “Country Report: Italy,” Asylum Information Database, Italian Council for Refugees, December 22, 2015, ed. European Council on Refugees and Exiles, <http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/italy>: 12.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 6.

³¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Guinea, Syria, Eritrea, Somalia, and Kosovo.³¹⁶ The majority of applications of people from Afghanistan, Guinea, Syria, Eritrea, and Somalia gained approval, while over 50% of the other asylum requests were rejected.³¹⁷ It is reasonable to assume that the approximately 50,000 who entered Italy and did not put in an application for asylum either moved on to other countries in Europe or remained in Italy outside of the official cognizance of the Italian government. Nearly 90% of the processed applications originated with men, regardless of country of origin.³¹⁸

The process for claiming asylum in Italy is fairly straightforward on paper, but in actuality is lengthy and onerous. The application process starts at either the border, or in regional offices within Italy.³¹⁹ Italian law establishes no time limit on when a person may file a claim for asylum, but suggests a “general rule” of filing a claim within eight days of entering Italy.³²⁰ In the regional offices, those seeking asylum formally register after the completion of fingerprints and photographs.³²¹ While police cannot assess the legitimacy of asylum claims, they do ask a series of questions to determine if an asylum-seeker’s application falls under the auspices of the Dublin Regulation.³²² Provided that Italy is the country that holds the responsibility for processing an asylum request, the asylum-seeker will return to the regional office for further paperwork.³²³ The regional police offices will then forward the necessary paperwork to Territorial Commissions or Sub-commissions for International Protection (*Commissioni territoriali per il riconoscimento della protezione internazionale*) (CTRPI) who are “the only authorities competent for the substantive asylum interview” and who work under the guidance of the “National Commission for the Right of Asylum (*Commissione nazionale per il diritto di*

³¹⁶ Ibid.

³¹⁷ Ibid.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 7.

³¹⁹ Ibid., 17.

³²⁰ de Donato, “Country Report: Italy,” 18.

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² Ibid.

³²³ Ibid.

asilo) (CNDA).”³²⁴ This entire process can take up to eighteen months before a decision is made regarding an asylum-seeker.³²⁵ Expedited procedures exist when a number of criteria are met by an asylum seeker and can drastically reduce the amount of time taken to make a decision regarding a particular application.³²⁶ Those denied asylum are told to vacate the country voluntarily, but many do not possess the means to do so.³²⁷

In principle, asylum seekers have nearly unrestricted access to most services available to Italian citizens; in practice, however, the Italian state is severely limited in its ability to provide adequate support to asylum seekers. First, asylum seekers are allowed to work 60 days after making their asylum requests.³²⁸ Integration and vocational programs provided by various entities, including the national government and local governments, help transition asylum seekers into the Italian workforce.³²⁹ Vocational training typically entails 30 hours per week of classes coupled with language instruction.³³⁰ In addition to access to the Italian labor market, asylum seekers have access to health care and education to the same extent as Italian citizens.³³¹ Integration programs are also available within primary schools for newly arrived asylum seekers.³³² Finally, asylum seekers are also provided with legal assistance vis-a-vis their applications, but of the benefits provided, this is one of the hardest to actually obtain due to the diversity of the people applying for asylum and the limitations of the Italian government.³³³ On paper, Italy possesses a fairly robust support system for asylum seekers. The practice of such policy is rife with problems inherent in the system, the

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid., 19.

³²⁶ Ibid., 19.

³²⁷ Diego Cupolo, “NGO Workers Denounce Italian Hotspot System,” *Deutsche Welle*, May 18, 2016, <http://www.dw.com/en/ngo-workers-denounce-italian-hotspot-system/a-19264701>.

³²⁸ de Donato, “Country Report: Italy,” 80.

³²⁹ Ibid., 81.

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Ibid., 82.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid., 34.

nature and magnitude of the crisis, and external political forces that also have a stake in the outcome of the challenge.

C. CHALLENGES TO THE ITALIAN ASYLUM SYSTEM

The Italian asylum system faces several shortcomings, within and without. As was the case with much of Europe, Italy found itself ill-prepared for the massive influx of refugees from the Mediterranean and took measures that were both haphazard and ill-considered in response. The largest challenge to the success of the Italian asylum system is the notion of the refugee hotspot, which was a measure pushed for by the European Union. The second challenge to the asylum system is the European Union's Dublin Regulation, which makes asylum seekers stay in the country they initially file an asylum application with and also provides an impediment to a coherent European Union response. Third, problems intrinsic to the Italian system include the long lead time, the lack of enforcement rules concerning people denied asylum, and the proper access to social services. The fourth obstacle is the narrow legal acceptance and recognition of asylum seekers arriving on Italian shores. The fifth major problem is the inadequacy of the system to properly integrate new arrivals in Italy. All merit a deeper examination because they prevent effective economic integration of both refugees and migrants in Italy.

The hotspot system was advocated by the European Union to control migration flows to Europe. Implementation began in September 2015, as a way to provide a few control points for entering migrants, as well as to serve as a corral for asylum seekers that would eventually relocate to various parts of the EU under a newly devised relocation program.³³⁴ Italy has six hotspots located throughout Sicily and southern Italy to facilitate processing of the arrivals of mixed migrants from the Mediterranean, with a "reception capacity for 93,000" that includes that aforementioned hotspots, as well as

³³⁴ European Union, European Commission, *The Hotspot Approach to Managing Exceptional Migratory Flows*, accessed June 10, 2016, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/2_hotspots_en.pdf.

Italian state facilities and accommodations.³³⁵ To date, the program has fallen fall short of its intended goal: as of June 2016, the EU has relocated a paltry number of only 143 asylees (of the agreed upon 120,000) to other EU member states from Italy, while the rest (numbering in the tens of thousands) wait for a decision on their application process, relocation, and employment opportunities.³³⁶ Those channeled into the hotspots that do not have their asylum applications approved are either deported, or become “*clandestini*,” or undocumented immigrants in Italy.³³⁷ The EU and Italy are the subjects of much criticism for the implementation and management of the hotspots from multiple NGOs that assert that the system is mistreating vulnerable groups, including children and those with mental illness,³³⁸ and also serves to drive migrants to illicit activities, once they are denied asylum status.³³⁹ The hotspot system deported only 14,000 people from Italy over the course of 2015, which left untold thousands without asylum status in legal limbo, as many do not possess the means to voluntarily leave.³⁴⁰

A second impediment to the economic integration of refugees within Italy is the Dublin III Regulation. The Dublin III Regulation is a European Union law that specifies the country responsible for examining an asylum application.³⁴¹ The law mandates that an asylum seeker must file his or her request for asylum in the country in which he or she entered the European Union.³⁴² This regulation swamps frontline nations, like Italy, within the EU by inhibiting the ability of such a state to pass an asylum application off to a less-burdened EU member state. In times of crisis and mass influx of refugees and other

³³⁵ European Union, European Commission, *Managing the Refugee Crisis Italy: State of Play Report*, accessed June 12, 2016, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/italy_state_of_play_report_en.pdf.

³³⁶ Ibid.

³³⁷ Cecile Debarge, “How Italy’s Flawed Hotspots are Creating Thousands of ‘Clandestini,’” IRIN, April 13, 2016, <https://www.irinnews.org/news/2016/04/13/how-italy%E2%80%99s-flawed-hotspots-are-creating-thousands-%E2%80%9Cclandestini%E2%80%9D>.

³³⁸ Cupolo, “Italian Hotspot System.”

³³⁹ Debarge, “Clandestini.”

³⁴⁰ European Union, *Italy: State of Play Report*.

³⁴¹ “Dublin III Regulation,” Citizens Information, March 23, 2016, http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/asylum_seekers_and_refugees/the_asylum_process_in_ireland/dublin_convention.html.

³⁴² “Dublin III Regulation.”

migrants, the Dublin Regulation serves to bottleneck asylum seeker movement and thus places a long-term burden on the frontline state. Successful economic integration of refugees, or other migrants, is more onerous when the entire state system is overburdened. Realizing this, the EU has devised ad hoc fixes, such as the relocation program, in order to share the burden of the mass influx of refugees and other migrants. Existing policy, coupled with EU member state sovereignty and national refusals to accept refugees, has helped compound the problems of the frontline nation of Italy.

While EU policy slows Italy's ability to economically integrate refugees and migrants, the Italian state's own policy serves as a major impediment to success in this regard. The lead time for asylum applications often reaches or exceeds 18 months, as the state lacks the resources to quickly sift through the diverse applicant appeals. Vocational programs for jobs are not standardized and programs vary by region.³⁴³ Although education is available and compulsory for everyone under 16 years of age, many asylees do not send their children to school and access can be limited depending on where asylees reside.³⁴⁴ Another factor here is that some schools may show reluctance to increasing their foreign-born enrollment.³⁴⁵ Asylee access to health care follows the familiar pattern of access to other social services. Access may be limited due to the remoteness of asylee residence or, when available, may lack the translation services necessary to convey asylee medical problems, or the expertise necessary to treat maladies unique to asylees.³⁴⁶ These shortcomings in services often lead an asylee to not go to the doctor until a condition has worsened, which constitutes a greater cost for the state in rendering medical care.³⁴⁷

The problems outlined earlier affect people in the asylum process or approved for protection as a refugee; they do not begin to address the problems of the migrants who are rejected for asylum. Italy rejects nearly 50% of the migrants who apply for protection

³⁴³ de Donato, "Country Report: Italy," 82.

³⁴⁴ Ibid.

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 84.

³⁴⁷ Ibid.

under asylum conventions. Since expulsion is primarily voluntary, Italy only adds to the *clandestini* ranks without a viable solution for rejected asylum seekers. These economic migrants thus operate outside of the purview of the state and often engage in activity of the shadow economy of Italy, which is at best untaxed income the state forgoes and at worst, illegal and illicit activity. Rejected economic migrants will live in the shadows until one of three scenarios occurs: the Italian state provides them with amnesty, the state expels them forcibly, or the migrants move on to another state. As the crisis continues unabated, the number of rejected economic migrants will continue to rise.

The final problem that Italy faces regarding the economic integration of refugees is its historically dismal record. Elena Cavena analyzed the platforms of the major political parties during the 2013 election in Italy, and found that almost none of them listed immigration in their platforms, and the ones that did (such as the right wing Northern League) associated it with crime and illicit activity.³⁴⁸ Nowhere in any political platforms was migrant or refugee integration discussed as an issue of importance. Anti-immigrant political parties play a large role in Italian politics, particularly in Northern Italy.³⁴⁹ Italy's problems with immigrant integration have caught the attention of international organizations. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) called Italy to task in 2014 by strongly suggesting that the country needed to do a better job of integrating its immigrant population. Specifically, the OECD stated that Italy needed

A clearer and more efficient co-ordination of integration bodies . . . across local and sub-national levels. Cutting red tape, identifying and mainstreaming effective integration projects are needed. Language training provision is an example of a policy area lacking coordination,

³⁴⁸ Elena Cavena, "The Integration of Migrants in Italy: An Overview of Policy Instruments and Actors," European University Institute, Migration Policy Center, May 2014, http://cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/32019/INTERACT-RR-2014_05.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

³⁴⁹ "Italy's Migrants Slowly Integrating," BBC News, February 6, 2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7871224.stm>.

with a [sic] myriad of different stakeholders funding and providing services with partial overlap.³⁵⁰

The OECD leveled this criticism at Italy in July 2014, just as the migrant crisis was gaining significant attention in the Mediterranean.

Italy thus faces several challenges concerning refugee and migrant integration and the crisis which brings them to the fore will continue for the indefinite future. The closing of the Balkan route and the EU-Turkey migrant deal will likely increase the number of people reaching Italian shores in 2016. The economic situation for much of Africa remains bleak with no substantive change in store in the near future. War continues to rage in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria, and Yemen. Without a massive improvement in political and economic conditions over large swaths of the world, Italy will continue to face the challenges of the refugee and migrant influx and must formulate flexible and long-term solutions to help it cope with the new *status quo*.

D. THE REALITY OF AND POSSIBILITY FOR MORE ECONOMIC GAIN IN ITALY

In the current refugee and migrant crisis, does a silver lining exist for the Italian state? It is clear from other cases that refugees can have a positive impact in their host countries when economic integration takes place. Does the same promise hold true for Italy? An examination of migrant impacts on Italy to date shows that, as with the cases noted earlier, Italy can benefit from the influx of refugees because it already benefits from in-country migrants. From a solution for Italy's demographic problem to a perpetuation of the Italian welfare state, migrants are having a positive impact on Italy. A change of current policy would facilitate some alleviation of the current crisis and hold prospects of more economic gain for Italy.

Italy faces a demographic problem on a fairly massive scale. As in many other European countries, Italian birth rates are low and its retirement population comprises an

³⁵⁰ "Italy Needs to Improve Immigrant Integration in Society and Work, Says OECD," OECD, July 7, 2014, <http://www.oecd.org/migration/italy-needs-to-improve-immigrant-integration-in-society-and-work.htm>.

ever-increasing portion of the population.³⁵¹ Due to the tumultuous nature of most immigrants' arrival methods to Italy, most refugees and migrants are under the age of 65.³⁵² This fact alone holds promise for Italy, because if economic integration occurred with new arrivals, it would hold the potential to expand the Italian tax base, which is a critical need as more of the Italian nation transitions to retirement age and leaves the workforce. Italy has a positive net immigration total, mostly spurred by the reunification of the families of migrants who settled in the country in previous years.³⁵³ The acceptance of more refugees would further add to the positive net gains for Italian immigration and would yield additional increases through family unification, since most of the refugees granted asylum in Italy are men. Expanding demographics is a major pillar for renewed Italian economic growth.

Apart from the population potential that the acceptance of more refugees may hold for Italy, what impact have accepted migrants had on the Italian state so far? A recent report about the five million migrants residing in Italy shows that they are having a positive impact on the Italian economy. In contrast with a widely held belief in Italy, migrants do not lead to indigenous unemployment, and nearly 70% of the five million legal migrants in Italy are employed and paying taxes.³⁵⁴ Another popular assumption in Italy is that migrants pose a net negative cost for the government. However, the opposite is true. Immigrants in Italy in 2014 received some €3 billion in social services, but through taxes paid nearly €8 billion to social welfare programs.³⁵⁵ In practical terms, Roberto Garofoli, the Chief of Staff to the Italian Finance Minister, said that the net balance received in revenue from migrants was enough to pay for 600,000 pensions for

³⁵¹ Drew Desilver, "Refugee Surge Brings Youth to an Aging Europe," Pew Research Center, October 8, 2015, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/10/08/refugee-surge-brings-youth-to-an-aging-europe/>.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Stefano Solare, "How Immigrants Are Saving the Italian Economy and Pensions," Open Migration, March 6, 2016, <http://openmigration.org/en/op-ed/how-immigrants-are-saving-the-italian-economy-and-pensions/>.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Ibid.

native Italians.³⁵⁶ The 2014 net gain from migrant tax revenue is over a threefold increase from the 2007 net gain of €1.4 billion.³⁵⁷ This trend shows that greater migrant settlement leads to greater net tax revenue for the state. Therefore, expanded programs for migrant and refugee settlement, while costly, can serve as a mechanism for investment in Italy's future. Migrants and refugees in Italy can contribute to the same positive economic trends as presented in other migrant and refugee cases.

To fully capitalize and realize the economic potential of the current crisis, Italy, along with the rest of the EU, must immediately address the shortfalls of the system. The EU must help Italy to shoulder the economic burden of crisis response. This would require billions of Euros to fully and adequately fund hotspot centers and provide the medical care necessary for the refugees. The EU must also come up with political agreements that work and would likely end, or at least reformulate, the Dublin III Regulation. Current plans for refugee relocation are failing in a rather dramatic fashion, due in large part to the failure of governments to conclude agreements with terms acceptable for all or most EU member states. Since many EU member states face the same demographic problems as Italy, a relocation program based on labor skills and talent might be more desirable than the current ineffectual quota system. This would require a collaborative effort across the EU, involving businesses, NGOs, and willing member states. A cohesive and long-term solution is ultimately what is needed for the EU to provide relief to Italy.

Italy must contend with its own internal problems as well. Asylum approval is just over 50% for applicants. The majority of those rejected simply fall into the already robust shadow economy of Italy. Though many will migrate elsewhere, many will elect to stay in Italy. Rejected asylum seekers become illegal immigrants in Italy, and thus increase the number of *clandestini*. Mass deportation of rejected asylum seekers is highly unlikely and cost-prohibitive. It would therefore be advantageous for Italy to approach the problem with gain in mind. An expansion of asylum request acceptance would be a good

³⁵⁶ "Italy's Immigrants Financing 600,000 Pensioners: Report," *Local IT*, March 9, 2016. <http://www.thelocal.it/20160309/italys-immigrants-financing-600000-pensioners-report>.

³⁵⁷ "Immigration Growth Benefits Italy," *Italian Insider*, November 13, 2013, <http://www.italianinsider.it/?q=node/1872>.

start to avoid driving people into the shadows. Establishment and funding of vocational programs across the country would allow Italy to redistribute asylees in a more effective and targeted manner; refugees could be sent to areas where their skill sets matched indigenous needs. Evidence suggests that relocation closer to or in urban areas leads to greater economic integration, so Italy's focus should be to relocate refugees to populated areas. Relocation based upon vicinity to urban areas would allow asylees to get more targeted and specialized medical care if needed. The current crisis requires a structured, well-funded, but decentralized response all at the same time; and thus the state must work closely with NGOs, local governments, and the Catholic Church to effectively and economically integrate migrants and refugees around the country.

Research shows that refugees can successfully integrate into a host nation's economy and effective state policy can aid this process. Refugees historically are both producers and consumers of goods and can boost demand for host nation communities, as well as provide employment for the indigenous population. Migrants in Italy, whether they be political asylees or economic migrants, reflect trends of the positive impact of refugees in other states. As Italy continues to struggle with the crisis in the Mediterranean, it must balance the external pressures from the European Union and the internal pressures of domestic politics as the crisis continues. Streamlined and effective policy that focuses on long term solutions from the European Union, the Italian government, Italian municipalities, and NGOs can smooth the immediate negative impacts of the crisis and lay the foundation for economic renewal in Italy. The Mediterranean crisis can serve as an opportunity for gain for the Italian nation, migrants, and asylum seekers alike.

VI. CONCLUSION

The Mediterranean migrant crisis is but one portion of the greater migrant crisis occurring within and around Europe. The impacts of the crisis are profound and widespread, and as mass migration will continue for the foreseeable future, the full measure of the event will not likely be known for some time. By examining the impacts of the crisis on Italy, one can extrapolate data and trends that may apply to the European Union as a whole. To date, the Italian response to the migrant crisis has been valiant but simultaneously incoherent and disjointed. The effects of the crisis on Italy hold dire warnings for the rest of the European Union, but simultaneously present opportunity, provided that the current policy is revised to handle the crisis in a more effective manner.

The Italian humanitarian efforts with Operation *Mare Nostrum* constituted an effective crisis-response mission at great cost to the Italian government. It is clear that without the mission and the heavy presence of the Italian Navy in the Mediterranean, which provided rescue-at-sea services to thousands of migrants, more deaths would have been the result of Italian Naval absence. Though the Italian Navy is credited with saving over 150,000 lives through the operation, it bore the majority of costs for the mission. Over the span of the 12-month operation, Italy received little, if any, material aid from the European Union and paltry EU financial aid for the mission costs. Only when the Italian government wound down the operation did it force greater European Union burden-sharing to the forefront. The EU has since taken over the humanitarian response efforts in the Mediterranean Sea under the auspices of Operation Sophia. The EU-funded and Italian-led operation continues to increase in both size and scope as the migrant crisis continues nearly unabated. Until the new Libyan government gains control over the national territory, provides security to its people, and is able to provide search-and-rescue operations for its maritime area of responsibility, the Mediterranean migrant crisis will likely continue for years. It is for these reasons, until the political and security situation stabilizes in Libya, that NATO naval forces should be brought in to aid the European Union's Naval Forces in the Mediterranean, along with the expansion of refugee and

migrant flow control points throughout the Mediterranean region. The addition of NATO help will not stop the crisis, but it will provide more assets to control its effects.

While there was never an opportune time to confront the largest migration crisis on the European continent since World War II, Italy was particularly ill-suited to adequately respond to the crisis with the instruments of economic power typically available to many nations of the European Union. Italy suffers from long term demographic problems, which put pressure on the welfare state. Italy's demographic problems were further compounded by the global economic crisis of 2008, which led to the sovereign debt crisis shortly thereafter. Characterized by a debt-laden and stagnant economy, Italy is further restricted from deficit spending by the European Union. In the heavily debt-burdened nation, the spending constraints imposed by the European Union have made emergency spending for the migrant crisis response an issue of political contention. The migrant crisis has encouraged the Italian government to be more assertive in Brussels by historical comparison, and the migrant crisis will likely necessitate greater burden-sharing within the EU, both economically and militarily. Italy is a proponent of greater economic and military interdependence in the EU, and the crisis (at a minimum) will continue to stimulate dialogue about greater EU burden-sharing.

Perhaps the most pressing trends that can be gleaned from examining the Italian response to the migrant crisis are the impacts that the crisis has had on Italian politics. Italian government institutions suffer from a legitimacy deficit vis-à-vis the Italian public. This deficit has led the Italian public to seek legitimacy through institutions outside Italy's borders, namely through those provided by the European Union. Since the European Union was reticent to aid Italy in its initial responses to the migrant crisis, and has provided military and economic aid in a disjointed manner, Euroscepticism is on the rise in Italy. In addition to growing Euroscepticism, Italy has seen a rise in right-wing political parties, the strongest of which is the Northern League. *Lega Nord* has worked to capitalize on the inability of the Italian government and the European Union to stem and control the tide of migrants entering the country. A widespread and mostly accurate perception that the migrant crisis is out of control prevails in Italy, and this impression extends beyond Italian borders to other EU member states. Unless the government of

Matteo Renzi and the European Union can reverse the perception that they have lost control, right-wing parties will likely continue to gain in popular support in the absence of measurable progress to address the migrant crisis.

While the effects of the migrant crisis on the Italian economy have had a large and costly impact, the crisis may present an opportunity for the Italian government. Various case studies have shown that refugees can have a positive economic impact on their host country if integrated properly. In order to take advantage of such economic prospects, Italy must work to revamp its immigration system. Asylum-seekers within Italy are denied at a nearly 50% rate, and without sufficient capabilities to deport those denied asylum, many stay in Italy and swell the numbers of the *clandestini*, or those who stay and work within the country outside of the official auspices of the Italian government. Italy must work to solve the problems in its immigration system and its interface with the EU via the Dublin III Regulation. Italy must also work to properly integrate the people to whom it grants asylum within the Italian economy by providing adequate language and vocational training. Working out a viable solution within the European Union for burden sharing of the challenges arising from the mass influx of refugees and migrants can hold a key to addressing the demographic decline in Italy and many other European Union member states.

Ultimately, political and security stability in Libya holds the key to Italian relief regarding the migrant crisis. Until then, Italy must continue to seek solutions within the European Union to effectively respond to and manage the Mediterranean migrant crisis. Second only to Greece in the EU, Italy is in a precarious economic situation, but two silver linings are at hand. Greater burden sharing within the European Union, as well as proper economic integration of the refugees granted asylum, can provide immediate and long term relief for the beleaguered Italian economy. Some semblance of control of the migrant crisis, whether real or perceived by the Italian public, is necessary to stem the rising tide of right-wing nationalism in Italy. While the migrant crisis threatens the political stability of the Italian state, it could, if managed more adroitly, hold the key to a revitalized Italian economy which is more integrated within the European Union, both economically and militarily.

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